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ABSTRACT

This report from St. Louis Community College (Missouri) provides an update of the college's activities and outcomes in accordance with the North Central Association's (NCA) standards for institutional effectiveness. It also outlines the college's assessment operations for the next five years, identifying specific activities to develop the systematic assessment of student learning and the process of feeding information back to faculty for improvement of courses, curriculums, and programs. This document describes the assessment process as having five components: (1) mission and goals; (2) outcomes; (3) means of assessment; (4) results of assessment; and (5) use of results. Institutional effectiveness is defined as the assessment of all units of the college--academic programs and departments, college services, and student development offices--and provides specific measures of assessment. Plans for the organization and supervision of assessment are also provided, including details on staffing, staff development, and resources. Appended are the 1996 Assessment Plan, reporting forms, the college's statement on general education, a timetable and flow chart for assessment, response to NCA concerns, job descriptions, the Learning Circle Model, committee assignments of programs and college services, assessment vocabulary, and frequently asked questions. (JJL)

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THE ASSESSMENT PLAN
AND A
FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT

AT

ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Submitted by the Summer Project Task Force on Assessment, July 31, 1998
Revised, August 27, 1998
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THE PRESENT ASSESSMENT OPERATION

Assessment Rationale[1]

HISTORY

In the 1980's, a series of commission studies of higher education[2] prescribed improvements for American higher education . . . especially undergraduate education. Most of these suggested assessment--measuring whether undergraduate education does what it is supposed to do--as a significant component of any renaissance in American universities and colleges.

At the same time, the American public, prompted by despair over the non-performance of elementary and secondary education, was coming to demand accountability of educators; in many states this pressure produced performance standards set by the legislature and enforced by a state department of education. So far, this has only extended beyond K-1 2 in two state,[3] but there is a general lack of confidence expressed by Congress and many states that higher education can provide the necessary quality assurances to the public.

Since 1989, North Central has stated the expectation that colleges and universities will assess institutional effectiveness. The ultimate goal of assessment is to indicate whether the institution does what it claims.
To decide institutional effectiveness, it is necessary to assess the effectiveness of the component units of the institution. So, assessment involves departments and support

> **B 20 OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT** ***BOARD POLICY***
> ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS COMMITTED TO THE CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AND THE USE OF THE RESULTS THEREOF TO IMPROVE LEARNING AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

services, administrators and clerical operations . . . but it starts with the classroom and the academic programs where student achievement is the focus. The purpose of assessment is the improvement of student learning.

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[1] This material incorporated from the SLCC Assessment Faculty Guide of August, 1997, and reproduced in the original Arial font for easy identification.

[2] *To Strengthen Quality in Higher Education* (1982); *A Nation at Risk* (1983); *To Reclaim a Legacy* (1984); *Involvement in Learning* (1984).

[3] Florida provides a particularly painful example of a statewide exam created legislatively which colleges struggle to satisfy . . . or circumvent.

DEFINITION

The North Central Association uses the phrase 'assess student learning' to mean the

> Systematic collection, examination, and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data about student learning and the use of that information both to document and to improve student learning.

The elements of this description provide the key points for which NCA evaluators look when visiting a member institution. They believe that a program to assess student learning should:

- be structured, systematic, and ongoing, not episodic;
- be related to other institutional strategies and long-range plans and to planning and budgeting processes;
- emerge from and be sustained by a faculty and administrative commitment to excellent teaching and effective learning;
- provide explicit and public statements regarding the faculty's expectations for student learning;
- collect, examine, and interpret the results of assessment to determine the degree to which the fit between faculty expectations for student learning are met by the competencies, knowledge, skills, and values students can be demonstrated to have acquired and the level of learning achieved;
- use the information obtained from assessment to document present student learning and suggest areas where instruction is resulting in optimal learning and where improvement is needed;
- provide encouragement and the means to test changes that could improve learning where they are indicated.[4]

It is to satisfy these points that St. Louis Community College has created an ongoing, faculty-driven process for assessing student learning and a faculty-staffed structure to implement it.

---

[4]Cecilia L. Lopez, "Classroom Research and Regional Accreditation: Common Ground" Briefings (North Central Association of Colleges and Schools) October 1996.

SOME PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

⇒ It is faculty driven. Faculty members identify the outcomes, specify the means of assessment, and decide what to do with the results.

⇒ It is an ongoing process. Instructors in departments and programs, as well as college services personnel are to do assessment as a regular and annual event.

⇒ It shows outsiders that we do what we say we do in words they can understand.

⇒ Assessment refocuses institutional attention on quality instead of enrollment--growth in numbers does not mean improvement.

⇒ Assessment is not and should not be associated with faculty evaluation.

> C 19 EMPLOYEE EVALUATION *BOARD POLICY*
> .... WHILE IT IS EXPECTED THAT ALL EMPLOYEES WILL PARTICIPATE IN ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO THEIR SERVICE OR PROGRAM AND MAY CHOOSE TO CITE THESE ACTIVITIES AS PART OF THEIR SELF-EVALUATION, EMPLOYEE EVALUATION WILL BE SEPARATE FROM ASSESSMENT.

⇒ Because the reason for assessment is the improvement of student learning, it continues after and apart from visits of accrediting agencies.

⇒ The object of analysis is the learning process, not the individual student or faculty member.

⇒ Assessment is about improving learning not judging teaching.

⇒ All outcomes cannot be assessed at the same time, so only a few of the many are assessed in any one year.

STRUCTURE

The primary work of assessment is performed by the assessment **units**, with the support of the campus assessment **committees**, under the direction of the district **council**.

ASSESSMENT UNITS

These are the classroom instructors, academic departments, career program offices, college service units, etc., which will identify outcomes – student outcomes in the case of instructors, career programs and academic departments and service goals in the case of college services -- and create the means of assessment. Most importantly, when the results of the assessment activities are available, these units are to interpret and decide the use of the results. They will also provide to the relevant campus committee or the Coordinator of Assessment a summary report of this activity. Outcomes assessment begins and ends with these units.

CAMPUS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES

On each campus there is an assessment committee which monitors and supports the assessment units, collects and records the forms on which outcomes, means, the results, and use of results are recorded, and educates the staff concerning the assessment process. Each committee reports to the campus senate or governance council and the institutional affairs committee.

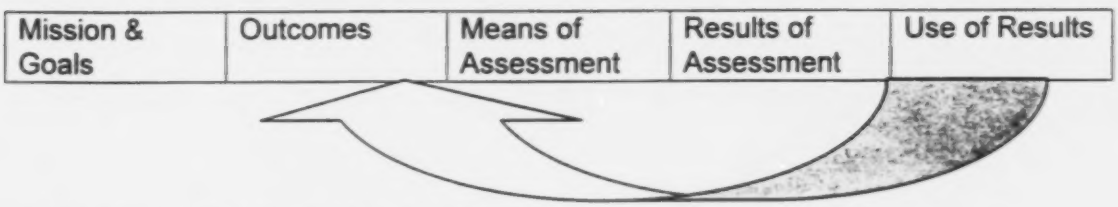
At present, each campus committee is composed of eight (8) faculty members, an employee from the campus services, an academic associate dean, the **placement** assessment professionals at that campus, and a student. However, the composition and duties of the campus committee may be changed as the District Council (*see below)* periodically evaluates the effectiveness of the assessment process.

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Reporting to the College Academic Council, this body sets general policy for the assessment structure and process, identifies the assessment units, supervises education about assessment, coordinates the process across the three campuses, and annually summarizes the results of assessment. The Council is currently composed of six faculty members, an employee from Cosand Center services, the Coordinator of Assessment (who reports as an employee to the Vice Chancellor for Education), and the Director of Institutional Research. Three of the six faculty members are the chairpersons of the campus committees; the other three are additional members of the campus committees elected, one from each committee, to serve on the Council.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The current assessment plan employs the Five-Column Model identified with Dr. Jim Nichols[5] as a useful means of representing the process for assessing outcomes. This model essentially identifies five steps to outcomes assessment.



COLUMN I -- MISSION AND GOALS

The rather broad Mission Statement of the institution is expanded into individual, specific goal statements. At SLCC, the District Assessment Council accepted as completed the task of expanding the statement and utilizes the goals identified through the strategic planning process. Here are phrases from the Mission Statement and the Strategic Planning Directions and Goals which affect most academic programs.

Mission Statement

> St. Louis Community College . . . assumes responsibility and leadership in responding to the multiple educational and training needs of its diverse community and is committed to delivery of high quality instruction. . .

Strategic Goals

> St. Louis Community College will create a more learner-focused institution;
>
> > provide flexible, innovative, and timely curricula and services to meet community, employer, and individual student needs, and;

[5]James O. Nichols, Director, University Planning and Institutional Research, The University of Mississippi and Institutional Effectiveness Associates.

promote the development and implementation of innovative and flexible teaching methodologies and delivery systems that enhance learner success.

At the beginning of the assessment process, each assessment unit will need to identify the portion or portions of the Mission Statement/Goals which the unit intends to be fulfilling. There is a clearly identified space for this on the reporting form.

COLUMN II – OUTCOMES

The assessment unit identifies intended outcomes for the program, course, service, etc. This is one of the most important steps in the process.

For an academic program or discipline, the unit is usually the department or career program. The outcomes statements are descriptions of what the faculty members thereof intend for students to know, think, or be able to do, as well as the attitudes, values, and skills to be acquired when they have completed the program or course. For the individual classroom, the outcomes are the knowledge units, skills, attitudes, etc., which the instructor intends to be learned in that day's class meeting. For a service, e.g. instructional resources, the outcomes are more likely to state the results of a process, rather than student achievements.

Each specific result should be the subject of a separate outcomes statement. Two outcomes connected with a conjunction do not simplify the task, as it is most likely that they cannot be evaluated with the same assessment means...and will remain two outcomes, not one.

The list of outcomes for a program may be long as the faculty members identify all the topics of knowledge they expect students to acquire, all the skills that must be gained to use that knowledge, and the changes in attitude that accompany participation in the program. By contrast, there may be only one intended outcome for an individual class meeting. However many intended outcomes there may be, only two or three will be assessed for a program or course in a given year–but the list should be preserved to provide additional outcomes to be assessed in the future.

The following are guidelines to obtaining useful outcomes statements:

- There should be only one result in each statement (use no conjunctions!)
- The outcome should be consistent with the Mission statement.
- It should identify a key or core learning, not details.

- The outcome should be reasonable given the ability of the students.
- It should be clear--so we can know when it's accomplished.
- The outcome need NOT be quantifiable, merely verifiable.

Faculty members from the three campuses meeting together on Staff Development Day, March 27, 1997, produced an impressive number of intended outcomes, some for specific programs, others for the four broad program areas [career, developmental, transfer, and general education.] The outcomes for the four program areas were then circulated among the faculty for their feedback and to ascertain which of the many outcomes had consensus support and, therefore, could serve as guides and goals for specific programs. These faculty-generated, faculty-selected outcomes indicate what the faculty expects students to achieve in SLCC programs.

CAREER PROGRAMS	DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS
1. **Students completing the program will be employed successfully in the field.**	1. Students will be successful at written and oral communication.
2. Students completing the program will be technically proficient in the field.	2. *Students successfully completing a course as a prerequisite will successfully complete the appropriate subsequent course.*
3. Students completing the program will meet accrediting/licensure requirements.	3. Students will be able to read effectively.
4. **Employers of students completing the program will express satisfaction with students' skills, attitudes, and job-related behavior.**	4. Students completing this developmental program will see themselves as capable of participating in an academic culture.
TRANSFER PROGRAMS	**GENERAL EDUCATION**
1. **Students will be able to transfer program courses to a four-year institution.**	1. Students will be successful at written and oral communication.
2. Students of this program will experience academic success at transfer institutions.	2. Students will be able to access, analyze, and interpret data related to course work.
3. Students will be satisfied with their preparation for transfer to a four-year institution.	3. Students will demonstrate problem-solving ability and scientific reasoning.
4. Students completing this transfer program will be accepted into the corresponding major program at a four-year institution.	4. Students will fulfill degree requirements.

The outcomes written for general education were superceded by the action of the Board of Trustees (June, 1998) in adopting a Statement on General Education which

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identifies seven major skill and knowledge areas. These now constitute the outcomes for General Education and are the basis for the assessment of general education proposed in this strategy. Similarly, this extension to the original plan proposes that those in bold face will be collected annually by the District Assessment Council for all programs in that category; the outcome in italics will be used for all developmental programs annually. Each career and developmental program will be expected to identify one additional outcome for assessment annually.

COLUMN III -- MEANS OF ASSESSMENT

For each outcome identified (above) the assessment unit must decide upon means of assessment. A means of assessment is the mechanism by which student achievement of the outcome is ascertained.

While a test is often the first means of assessment to come to mind, the important distinction is that assessment is concerned with the aggregate performance of a group of students rather than the testing of individual students to determine course grades. Further, the course test created by the instructor does not carry the same sense of abstraction and objectivity as a national standardized test, whereas a departmental exam would be more objective.

It is important that there be more than one assessment means for each outcome. For example, a standardized test (if available for that program) and a survey of student attitudes which asked if students 'felt well-prepared' might both assess a 'knowledge-of-the-field' outcome.

> In creating and describing the means of assessment, it is crucial that specific standards or criteria be identified up front . . . or the results will tell the department or program faculty nothing.

With the exception of the required outcomes for career and developmental programs (*to be described below)* where the District Assessment Council has adopted a standard, there is no required level of success – that is the judgment of the faculty members. However, performance levels should reflect what OUR students can do . . . 100% surpassing national norms is too high and unrealistic, 25% of a national norm is so low as to be suspect (presumably they should be able to perform that poorly without our help.)

PROGRAM AND COURSE ASSESSMENT MEANS

Following is a list of commonly used means of assessment for programs and courses. The list is not exhaustive and is not a shopping list; that is, departments are urged to create means of assessment NOT on the list whenever the new creation is better suited to measuring the outcome they have identified.

Qualitative Means. These assessment tools try to grasp the whole of a student's achievement with information which usually cannot be quantified and/or counted. Key to using these means is a clear statement in advance of the ingredients and criteria for judgment. For program assessment, a summary of the aggregate of these measures would be needed: 70% of the student portfolios (for example) would be found to be acceptable:

- **Portfolio** - Each student would create a portfolio with the same ingredients and, for the program assessment, the same elements in each would be reviewed.

- **Public Performance** - In art or music each student might have a culminating product or performance and, with some creative thought, students might be evaluated in other fields by different forms of performance, e.g., participation in student elections, volunteer work, clinicals, practice-teaching, etc.

- **Juried Competition** - Here there would need to be outsiders, e.g. a panel of colleagues from another institution or employers.

- **Oral Examination or Defense of a Thesis** - Again, outside experts would be needed for the judging.

- **Interviews** - These can be especially useful for college services, where student perception of advice/help received can demonstrate performance.

Quantitative Means. These tools have the advantage of producing numerical data which can be easily aggregated to indicate program performance.

- **Standardized Tests** - These have the advantage of instant credibility but are not available for all programs and disciplines and, more importantly, may not suit (in the judgment of the program faculty here) what is done in our program or field. They also are expensive.

- **Locally-developed Tests** - These allow a department to tailor the test to the actual content of a program or course and let the faculty later pinpoint just what students aren't achieving, but they take a lot of faculty time and may

lack credibility. However, they can be useful in conjunction with other means of assessment.

- **Admissions Tests for Transferring Students** - The problem is, there aren't many places using them.

- **Licensure Exams** - CPA, nursing board, and similar exams are excellent measures of a program's effectiveness.

- **Surveys** - Sent to former students, these can provide measures of employment, indicators of student satisfaction with training received, self-evaluation of competency, etc. Sent to employers, they can produce evaluations of student skills, attitudes, and knowledge and of employer willingness to hire our students in the future.

- **Tracking Data from Transfer Institutions** - Transfer acceptance and performance after transfer are key measures of our transfers programs. The College regularly receives data on numbers of SLCC students at state and private institutions, numbers of degrees received, GPAs at the end of the first year, and SS# lists of SLCC students. Tracking of students in specific disciplines, however, requires special requests to the receiving institutions, even articulation.

- **Observational** - This means of assessment involves a particular kind of knowledge-based performance, where the assessment is a matter of observing (or counting) how many students successfully performed some product of learning (assuming it is required of all students in that program.) Examples would include: creating an executable computer program, publishing a journal article, submitting an architectural plan, designing an advertising campaign, repairing a mechanical defect, completing an accounting project etc.)

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES (CATs)

In classroom assessment, the faculty member is free to select any means of assessment appropriate to the purpose. This may mean constructing a new technique or adapting one of the hundreds of different classroom techniques available in the literature. What it rarely means is 'testing the student' for the purpose of classroom assessment is not student grading, but an aggregate picture for the instructor of whether most students are learning the intended outcome.

COLUMN IV - RESULTS

This is the step of administering the several means of assessment specified above and collecting the results.

In the case of surveys, there will be considerable time spent creating and mailing/administering the survey instrument; results may be slow in coming in and only a small number will respond at all. In the case of tests, getting students to take them will require some creative use of incentives IF the test is not part of a key course, a capstone course or required in order to get the degree/certificate. There is no incentive for a student to come on a Saturday to take a test that is just for program assessment.

Once gathered, the results will be reported along with the means of assessment. The statements can be brief: "70% responded they would hire future graduates"; "55% of the articles were found acceptable"; "The average score was at the 37th percentile". Because the criterion was stated in the means of assessment, the results need only state the results in the terms specified.

COLUMN V - USE OF RESULTS

If the purpose of the assessment process is to improve learning, then this step is the payoff, the bottom line. Here the department members decide what the results tell them about student learning. If the criterion was clear, each result should indicate that the learning the department intended to take place either is . . . or is not . . . being achieved.

A FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY TO IMPROVE ASSESSMENT

The assessment plan submitted to NCA in December, 1996, prescribed a structure built on the principle of a faculty-driven process because that principle seemed to guide most successful assessment plans at other institutions. The Plan was developed by the College-wide Assessment Council formed in August 1996 in pursuance of the 1995 Assessment Plan submitted to NCA. The Council developed the 1996 three-year Assessment Plan "to create a culture of assessment, to generate systemic and systematic assessment of student learning and to feed information back to faculty for improvement of courses, curriculums and programs." Four faculty members were appointed from each campus to serve on that Council, selected to represent the four areas – transfer, general education, career, and developmental education. When NCA accepted it, the 1996 Plan became the SLCC Assessment Plan and continues in force. This strategy builds on the provisions of that plan to implement assessment and institutional effectiveness.

Following the first year of operation and the NCA site visit, the College opted to revise and augment the strategies outlined in the Plan. A Summer Project Task Force on Assessment was created for 1998 to review our activities and propose a strategy for further development. The project had been advertised in the spring and volunteers solicited from all faculty members. The four full-time and one adjunct faculty members who applied represented all three campuses and were all accepted. Their recommendations, offered in this plan, allow for all components of the college to be part of a highly-effective assessment program of classroom assessment, course assessment, program assessment, service unit assessment, and the assessment of assessment. The expanded plan will satisfy NCA by demonstrating a clear relationship between all areas of the college working to improve learning. Classroom assessment will help teachers know what students are really learning and therefore they will be able to change their classrooms if and when needed to make sure students learn what they need to know. Course assessment will help teachers know whether or not the goals and objectives of the course profiles are being met and will offer help in case they are not. Program assessment will ensure that students are prepared for further study or are employable and technically knowledgeable. Service unit assessment will assist those units in the performance of their support services. Assessment of assessment will help keep our assessment program on target--are we really assessing as we should and using the information to improve.

Forums were held on each campus during the month of November in order to facilitate a college wide discussion of the Five Year Assessment Plan. Dr.Patricia Donohue and members of the assessment committees explained in detail the history of SLCC's involvement with the NCA Assessment Process and further explained the need for implementing a coherent, on-going , and fully functional assessment plan. NCA requires an assessment plan for institutional effectiveness, the heart of which is a focus on assessment of student academic achievement and learning improvement. Our future accreditation depends on implementing a workable assessment plan that demonstrates a feedback loop into instruction and clearly shows that instruction is changing in relationship to the learning of our students. Further additions and

changes were incorporated in this proposal as a result of negotiations and discussions between the Task Force and representatives of NEA.

A glossary of terms has been included. Also included is a list of FAQ'S which will answer many of the questions raised at the forums. The plan has been revised to demonstrate that assessment is a part of the already established system for change and improvement in course and program development at SLCC.

Faculty members will be able to teach their courses as in the past with the addition of assessment practices to help them. Many faculty have already incorporated these practices into their classroom management and the Five Year Strategy will offer them a system to document these practices for NCA purposes and for future discussion with colleagues. The classroom assessment form will be kept by the mentor and may be submitted without names attached. The purpose is not faculty evaluation; it is improvement of learning.

The Task Force and NEA respectfully submit this revised Five Year Assessment Strategy—a plan that has been revised in response to the ideas expressed at the forums held on each campus and by NEA. The plan is submitted as one that is sound and will help the college gain full NCA accreditation, and as one that will clearly help in the improvement of learning.

The 1996 Assessment Plan focused on "outcomes assessment," since the college has been involved with assessment for student placement – also known as "intake assessment" – throughout its history. The placement decisions made as a result of intake assessment have implications for outcomes assessment at all levels. As the placement/assessment centers on each campus are categorized as a college service and are expected, under the 1996 Assessment Plan, to participate in program assessment, suggestions regarding assessment of the assessment offices are listed under program assessment *(below)*

Following the advice of Dr. Jim Nichols, initial efforts at assessment have focused on the program level, with lesser attention to department, course, and classroom levels. During the 1997-98 school year, faculty and staff of career, transfer, and developmental programs were expected to participate in a process to define plans for assessment of outcomes. These plans were to include intended educational outcomes or objectives, means for assessment and criteria for success, and a plan for use of the results. At the same time, the college services were conducting program assessment using the same model. The five-year plan proposed by the Assessment Task Force continues program assessment in the services and places it on an annual basis. In the academic areas, the Plan will activate the additional levels of assessment envisioned in the 1996 Assessment Plan, building on the framework of existing assessment by department and individual instructors cited therein.

I. Levels of Outcomes Assessment

Institutional effectiveness is determined by the assessment of all units of the College – academic programs and departments, college services, and student development offices. The learning process directed by the academic departments involves classroom, course, and program assessment, while the college services are involved in program assessment. *N.B.: the terms "department," "discipline," and "program" are used here in the NCA sense of a single, college-wide entity, not three separate campus organizations.*

A. Classroom Assessment

The mission statement of the college suggests a commitment to putting learners and learning first in all matters concerning the operation of the college. The learning process begins in the environment in which course material is presented. Whether the course is delivered electronically or in more traditional classrooms, we will call this the classroom level. If the guiding question of assessment at St. Louis Community College is "What is it that students should know?" then the assessment process should begin at the classroom level and focus on classroom assessment and its results as the foundation of the process. We must make sure that all of the outcomes, structures, and assessment processes that occur at the institutional, program, and course levels are constantly re-evaluated and re-designed according to the findings by individual instructors who regularly validate learning within individual classes.

Classroom assessment is an assessment activity done by the individual instructor in his/her classroom. The assessment activity is the choice of the instructor, selected to assess the particular outcome identified by the instructor for that day's class. The assessment device may be of the instructor's own creation or one selected from the many already in use by others.

Faculty must be encouraged to incorporate classroom assessment techniques into their instructional delivery. It is in the process of classroom assessment that changes will occur within the culture of the college. The information derived from classroom assessment can only be used by the instructor to improve learning as she/he sees fit. The assessment record provides documentation that assessment was done, not whether it meets a standard.

1. Beginning with the Spring 1999 semester and every semester thereafter, each faculty member (adjunct and full-time) is asked to conduct at least one classroom assessment activity each semester. *N.B. This does not replace the expectation that faculty members will also participate in the course and program assessment activities of their department or program.*

2. Faculty members are asked to conduct that classroom assessment early enough in the semester to be able to informally share the results with students.

3. Faculty members are urged to discuss with other members in the program/department/discipline in a collegial and academic manner the results of their

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classroom assessments as a means to collective improvement of the learning of their students.

4. Faculty members will be expected to submit an assessment record (*see Appendix B*) for each assessment activity to their program coordinator, chairperson, or discipline member responsible for assessment.

B. Course Assessment

Course assessment is the assessment of individual courses. While this assessment naturally takes place within individual departments, programs or disciplines, there is a need for more communication between the three individual campuses. Therefore, faculty members in academic disciplines which produced the course profiles in October 1996 are expected to work together to determine outcomes, means of assessment and use of results for courses in their discipline, developing an assessment plan consistent with the other elements of this plan.

1. In academic year 1998-99, each department/discipline/program is to designate a faculty member in the group to supervise assessment and the completion of the assessment forms

2. Each department/discipline/program is to ensure that each course profile includes outcomes and objectives for each course regularly offered that outcomes and objectives include the appropriate General Education Skill Areas. (*See Appendix C*)

3. Beginning with the Spring 1999 semester and using the course profiles and other relevant data each department/discipline/program will discuss outcomes and assessment means for each course within the academic disciplines and begin to develop a plan for the use of assessment results.

4. Beginning with the Fall 1999 semester, each department/discipline/program will agree on outcomes and assessment means for each course and design a plan for the use of assessment results; they should target one or two courses in each discipline initially.

C. Program Assessment

Much has been done in the first stages of our efforts to complete a college-wide program assessment during the 1997-1998 academic year. The units identified to undertake program assessment were career, developmental, transfer, general education, plus the college services. Each career and developmental program, department or discipline, and each college service was assigned to a campus committee or to the Coordinator of Assessment for purposes of reporting forms and meeting assessment guidelines and deadlines. These assignments will continue. (*See Appendix H.)* This plan contains many changes and new initiatives for the academic programs, but continues virtually unchanged the assessment of college services.

"In 1988, all three campuses used different initial placement tests. In 1994, a college-wide Entry Assessment Task Force, made up of the College's assessment managers and faculty department chairs from English, reading and amathmatics from each campus, was formed in order to move the College to a common entry assessment. As the College developed common outcomes, and competencies, it became apparent that a common entry assessment was needed. The task force decided to move from paper and pencil testing to the Accuplacer, a computerized placement test."[6]

The College has adopted Accuplacer as the common means of entry assessment and validation studies are ongoing, with refinement of cut-off scores in process.
Departments/disciplines/programs are urged to establish reading and other minimum skill requirements with cut-off scores for entry assessment placement in their courses.

Academic Programs

In the first year of implementing the 1996 Assessment Plan, career programs often identified 'employer satisfaction' and '180 day employment of graduates' as program outcomes; transfer programs set outcomes based on transfer rate and first semester student success, and developmental programs frequently named 'success rate in next sequence course' as the principle outcome to be assessed. The College must now begin the process of "following through" with these program assessments and extending program assessment in general.

1. **General Education.** Assessment of General Education will be a cross-disciplinary project assessing the General Education Skill Areas, beginning with "Communicate Effectively" in the 1998-99 academic year. A new skill area will be assessed each academic year, with continuing assessment of previously assessed skills, so that at some point all General Education Skill Areas will be assessed on an ongoing basis.

Structure

- Each department/discipline/program will determine which skill areas pertain to its course offerings and to what degree.
- All assessment units must be prepared to participate in cross-disciplinary assessment in four of the seven skill areas.
- The District Assessment Council will oversee the General Education Activities by
  - monitoring each pilot project and recommending needed modifications.
  - monitoring on-going General Education assessment activities.
  - reviewing data collected by the end of each academic year.
  - making recommendations for changes based on assessment results.
  - reporting results and recommendations back to assessment units.

Implementation

[6] College Assessment Plan 1996, pp.5-6.

First Year (1998-99)

- The skill area "Communicate Effectively" will be assessed in General Education courses with a pilot run of the General Education Communication Assessment Test (GenCat)*.
- The District Assessment Council panel will investigate assessment instruments and develop a pilot project to assess the skill area "Think Critically" (Second Year skill area).
- Faculty will be trained in prompt writing and holistic scoring for the GenCat.
- Faculty will be trained in methods to implement the assessment of critical thinking.

Second Year (1999-2000)

- The GenCat will continue to be used district-wide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- A pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Think Critically" will begin.
- The District Assessment Council will investigate assessment instruments and develop a pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Appreciate Aesthetic Expression" (Third Year skill area).
- Faculty training in prompt writing and holistic scoring for the GenCat will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of critical thinking will continue.
- Faculty will be trained in methods to implement the assessment of appreciating aesthetic expression.

Third Year (2000-01)

- The GenCat will continue to be used district-wide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- The assessment of the General Education Skill area "Think Critically" will continue district-wide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- A pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Appreciate Aesthetic Expression" will begin.
- The District Assessment Council will investigate assessment instruments and develop a pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Interact Productively" (Fourth Year skill area).
- Faculty training in prompt writing and holistic scoring for the GenCat will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of critical thinking will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of appreciating aesthetic expression will continue.
- Faculty will be trained in methods to implement the assessment of the interacting productively.

Fourth Year (2001-02)

- The GenCat will continue to be used district-wide with a representative sample of

* This means of assessment was developed by Metropolitan Community College of Kansas City and is used here with permission.

General Education courses participating.

- The assessment of the General Education Skill area "Think Critically" will continue district-wide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- The assesssment of the General Education Skill area "Appreciate Aesthetic Expression" will continue districtwide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- A pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Interact Productively" will begin.
- The District Assessment Council will investigate assessment instruments and develop a pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Understand, Access, Analyze, and Use Information" (Fifth Year skill area).
- Faculty training in prompt writing and holistic scoring for the GenCat will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of critical thinking will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of appreciating aesthetic expression will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of interacting productively will continue.
- Faculty will be trained in methods to implement the assessment of understanding, accessing, analyzing, and using information.

Fifth Year (2002-03)

- The GenCat will continue to be used district-wide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- The assessment of the General Education Skill area "Think Critically" will continue district-wide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- The assesssment of the General Education Skill area "Appreciate Aesthetic Expression" will continue districtwide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- The assessment of the General Education Skill area "Interact Productively" will continue districtwide with a representative sample of General Education courses participating.
- A pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Understand, Analyze, Access and Use Information" will begin.
- The District Assessment Council will investigate assessment instruments and develop a pilot project to assess the General Education Skill area "Accept Personal Responsibility" (Sixth Year skill area).
- Faculty training in prompt writing and holistic scoring for the GenCat will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of critical thinking will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of appreciating aesthetic expression will continue.
- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of interacting productively will continue.

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- Faculty training in methods to implement the assessment of understanding, accessing, analyzing, and using information will continue.
- Faculty will be trained in methods to implement the assessment of "Accept Personal Responsibility".

2. **Transfer programs.** Data for transfer performance will be collected and evaluated for the college as a whole. This information will be included in the Coordinator of Assessment's Annual Report. (Transfer data will not be reviewed for individual programs.)

3. **Career programs.** The work of program assessment for Career Programs begun during the 1997-98 academic year will be expanded. Beginning with the 1998-99 academic year, the District Assessment Council will annually review assessment data for all career programs and set criteria for success on the following two measures.

   - Data on two measures of program success - "employer satisfaction with the preparation of graduates" and "employment within 180 days of program completion" – are regularly collected by the Office of Institutional Research: this data will be provided to each career program annually by the Assessment Director for analysis. The District Assessment Council will set the criteria for success on these two measures. Use of the results of these assessment measures will be reported on Form D annually with the results of other outcomes.
   - Beginning with the 1998-99 academic year, each career program will provide on Form B at least one additional outcome and means of assessment to be conducted in that academic year. (*See Appendix D for Assessment Timetable*) Results and use of results will be reported on Forms C and D respectively.
   - Career Programs not meeting the criteria for success on the two designated outcomes will be notified in writing by the District Assessment Council of the need for a Program Evaluation or Review.
   - A copy of the notification of the need for Program Evaluation or Review will be distributed to the Associate Deans responsible for that program and forwarded to the Vice Chancellor for Education for follow up.
   - Career Programs notified of the need for a Program Evaluation or Review will be required to conduct same and produce a plan for improvement. The plan for improvement must be received by the Vice Chancellor for Education within six months of notification of the need for Program Evaluation or Review. The Vice Chancellor for Education will submit the plan to the District Assessment Council after review by the Executive Deans.

4. **Developmental programs.** The work of program assessment for Developmental Programs begun during the 1997-98 academic year will be expanded. Beginning with the 1998-99 academic year, the District Assessment Council will annually review assessment data for all developmental programs and set a criterion for success on one outcome to be assessed by each developmental program. The initial criterion for success of developmental programs has been defined as "success rates in the next sequence courses".
   - Beginning with the 1998-99 academic year, each developmental program will provide on Form B at least one additional outcome and means of assessment to be reviewed for the following academic year. (See Appendix D for Assessment Timetable). Results and use of results will be reported on Forms C and D, respectively.
   - Developmental Programs not meeting the criteria designated for success will be notified in writing by the District Assessment Council of the need for a Program Evaluation or Review.
   - A copy of the notification of the need for Program Evaluation or Review will be distributed to the Associate Dean responsible for that program and forwarded to the Vice Chancellor for Education for follow up.
   - Developmental Programs notified of the need for a "Program Evaluation" will be required to conduct the "Program Evaluation" and produce a plan for improvement. The plan for improvement must be received by the Vice Chancellor for Education within six months of notification of the need for Program Evaluation or Review. The Vice Chancellor for Education will submit the plan to the District Assessment Council after review by the Executive Deans.

5. **General Provisions for program assessment**

   - Programs not meeting outcomes goals will be eligible for assistance from the Reserve Fund.
   - The District Assessment Council will suggest program deactivation for dormant academic programs.
     - The criteria for dormancy will be:
       - No student enrollment in the program for two academic years
       - No program graduates for five academic years.
     - The District Assessment Council will notify the relevant faculty for initiation of the process and will submit a list of programs suggested for deactivation to College Academic Council and the Vice Chancellor for Education by the November meeting of that academic year.
   - Proposals for new academic programs will be accompanied by an assessment plan for that program
     - The plan will include learning outcomes, means of assessment, and a plan for use of the assessment results.
     - The new program will review learning outcomes and means of assessment on a regular basis.

COLLEGE SERVICES

The college services will continue to conduct annual assessment as previously established, following the same schedule as career programs. Those college services which have not started assessment will begin in the fall '98 semester, while those who did start last year will be expected to do so again this year, thus establishing an annual cycle of assessment.

1. Commencing with the fall of 1998, each college service will record with the assigned campus committee or Coordinator of Assessment a contact person within the service. This person will be responsible for seeing that assessment forms are completed and submitted on time in the fall, that the results of assessment (when available in the spring) are circulated within the service, and that appropriate staff in that service are convened for the purpose of considering and making use of the results of the assessment.

2. Each fall, each service will identify two outcomes (or performance goals or objectives) and two means of assessment for each outcome to be measured during that budget year. *(Form B)* This will be due to the responsible campus committee or the Coordinator of Assessment by the 2nd Monday of October.

3. The results of the assessment are expected in the spring *(Form C,)* with a report of the use of the results by the unit to improve service *(Form D,)* due by the first Friday of April.

4. The placement/assessment service is asked in its annual assessment to address the extent to which it provides information for the staff on the following aspects of placement:
   - means and manner of data collection;
   - availability of data on numbers of 'W','D', & 'F' grades in college-level as well as developmental courses with placement requirements; and
   - correlation of those grades with placement test scores.

D. *Assessment of Assessment*

The district-wide plan for institutional assessment and the products and results of the plan must be assessed on a more global scale. This assessment process must involve persons separate from St. Louis Community College. While there will be comments and recommendations from our constituents and from our accrediting agency (NCA) there is a need for direct and continuing evaluation of our institutional plan for assessment on a regularly scheduled basis.

1. This evaluation should take the form of a "peer review". Qualified faculty and/or administrators from like institutions will be asked to serve as consultants for this evaluation.

2. Beginning with the academic year 1998-99, peer reviews will be conducted annually.

3. Items for peer review shall include, but not be limited to:

   - The degree of participation of assessment units.

   - The quality and quantity of documentation of results. This will include a measure of the completeness and accuracy of reports and a measure of punctuality in reporting results.

   - Demonstrated use of assessment results in program and classroom assessment.

II. The Organization and Supervision of Assessment

The Assessment Plan submitted to NCA in December 1996 prescribed a structure built on the principle of a faculty-driven process because that principle seemed to guide most successful assessment plans at other institutions. The Plan for each campus provided a committee of eight faculty members, an administrator (associate dean), the campus professional personnel already engaged in intake assessment and/or institutional research, and a student. A year later, as program assessment was introduced for the college services, a non-faculty person from the services was added to each committee. From these committees were drawn six faculty members (the chairperson and one other from each campus committee) who, with a consulting administrator, and a non-faculty member from the Cosand Center, would form the District Assessment Council. The position of Coordinator of Assessment was created in May 1997 and this person came to chair the Council.

The Coordinator of Assessment, working with the District Assessment Council, has guided the college through the first stage of our institutional assessment process. As the institutional plan for assessment is further defined and enhanced, it becomes necessary to define a staff structure. While it seems simple and straightforward to place the burden for the work of the next stages of our institutional assessment plan with administrators and department chairs, the nature of the work associated with any institutional assessment plan is such that there is a need for dedicated staff positions. There should be an Assessment Associate for the district.

A. Staffing

1. A new research position, to be called the Assessment Associate (grade 10) should be created and filled during the Fall, 1998 semester.

    - This person will be based in the Office of Institutional Research.
    - This person will report to the Director of Institutional Research and Planning.
    - This person should have experience both as a research professional and as a teaching faculty member.
    - The Assessment Associate will perform other duties and responsibilities as specified in the job description (*See Appendix F*)

2. The position of Coordinator of Assessment will be a continuing , full-time position.

    - This position should be filled by a faculty member on temporary assignment (full released time).
    - The same person may not serve in this position for more than three consecutive years.
    - The need for this position should be reviewed annually.
    - This person should, in addition to other duties, serve as chairperson of the District Assessment Council.

- The Coordinator of Assessment reports directly to the Vice Chancellor for Education and has the responsibility to make reports to the College Institutional Affairs Council and the College Academic Council.
- The Coordinator of Assessment shall be based at the Cosand Center to facilitate coordination with the Assessment Associate and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.
- The Coordinator of Assessment will perform other duties and responsibilities as specified in the job description. (*See Appendix F*)

3. The District Assessment Council shall be continued with its present composition.

4. The Campus Assessment Committees should continue with their current composition.

- The staff development and training duties of the committees shall be gradually devolved upon the departments and programs. This should be completed by the end of the spring semester 1999.
- Each committee will report to the campus governance unit, which is responsible for the progress of assessment on that campus and which should intercede where appropriate to advance implementation of the policies of the campus assessment committee and the District Assessment Council.
- The campus president or a dean assigned by the president should also be responsible for the progress of assessment on that campus and intercede where appropriate to advance implementation of the policies of the campus assessment committee and the District Assessment Council.

5. During the 1998-99 academic year each department/discipline/program is to select a member thereof to supervise assessment in the unit.

- The person designated may be full- or part-time faculty and may be any member of the group including the department chairperson or program coordinator
- This person will be compensated by released/overload time. The formula for this released time will consider the size of the learning unit.
- This person accepts responsibility for coordinating the education of other members in the department/discipline/program about the theories and processes of assessment and sharing training and expertise with them and will coordinate appropriate paperwork.
- While members of their departments responsible to the chair and associate dean, these persons will also provide assessment information and forms to the Coordinator of Assessment.

B. Staff Development

St. Louis Community College continually and consistently demonstrates a commitment to staff development. For any institutional plan for assessment to succeed, this commitment to staff development must be broadened both financially and intellectually. There is a need for training of staff in the nature of assessment, the documentation of assessment, and the effective use of the results of assessment. There is a need for support of programs already in place that support classroom assessment and other forms of assessment - particularly the Writing Programs, the Instructional Skills Workshops, Learning Circles and Learning Communities, and Academic Integration that have already been established. There is a need for new learning communities that focus on particular assessment issues. Above all, there is a need for encouragement of dialogue among faculty members. The success of our institutional plan for assessment will be derived not only from active participation in the process of assessment, but also from the opening of new lines of communication and the resultant sharing of ideas. It is this sharing of ideas that will provide faculty and staff with the reassurance and encouragement to extend our horizons.

1. Beginning with the Fall, 1998 semester, there will be specific staff development opportunities at each campus for faculty to learn more about assessment, particularly classroom assessment techniques.

2. During the Fall 1998 semester the Coordinator of Assessment will conduct training workshops for college services undertaking assessment for the first time during this budget year.

3. Beginning with the 1998-99 academic year, Learning Communities will be established at all three campuses, using the Learning Circle Model. *(See Appendix G)*

    - There will be one community per campus for each General Education skill area.
    - Each Learning Community will give particular attention to assessment issues and activities related to that skill area.
    - Learning Communities will be managed by the staff development coordinator for their respective campuses.
    - Participants will be faculty volunteers.
    - Participants will accept certain responsibilities such as to meet regularly, prepare reports, etc.
    - There will be a released time incentive for first-semester participants of one credit hour.
    -

4. Beginning with the Spring 1999 semester and continuing thereafter, dedicated blocks of time will be scheduled during Service Week for assessment units and learning communities to meet and greet. The Coordinator of Assessment will work with campus staff development coordinators to reduce schedule conflicts for these sessions.

C. Resources

The National Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, at a workshop in April 1998, stated that institutions are spending three to five per cent of the instructional budget on assessment. Three percent of the St. Louis Community College instructional budget for FY98 is $1,886,824. The St. Louis Community College expenditure for assessment (coordinator, workshop/travel, printing, and the campus allocations) in FY98 totaled approximately $175,000. In order for our institutional plan for assessment to succeed, there must be an increased financial commitment by the College.

1. We recommend the establishment of a reserve fund of $1,000,000 beginning with FY'00, and continuing for FY'01, FY'02, with a reexamination of the need for such fund during FY'02. This fund will be used to help assessment units needing assistance in making improvements indicated by assessment results.

   For example, a developmental program fails to reach its goals. The unit finds it cannot identify the reason for this failure and feels it needs an outside evaluation of the problem. A consultant is hired and recommends lower class sizes and an upgrade of computer equipment as the means of helping the unit to reach its goals.

   The reserve fund will be used to fund these recommendations for a period of time (2-3 years) after which a re-evaluation of the program's performance will be accomplished under the direction of the Vice Chancellor for Education.

   - The reserve fund will be administered by a special committee composed of:
     - The Vice Chancellor for Education
     - One College President
     - Two Associate Deans
     - Three Department Chairs
     - Three Additional Faculty Members
     - Three Representatives from College Services
   - The committee will present recommendations regarding the reserve fund to the Chancellor for approval and action.

2. Programs and departments establishing entry cutoff levels or similar minimum skill requirements for placement in courses by intake assessment and which suffer consequent enrollment decline are to be supported by the College through the transition period.

3. Beginning with the academic year 1998-99, the district should hire a person to be Assessment Associate.
4. With the hiring of the Assessment Associate, the keeping of assessment forms and records previously performed by the Coordinator of Assessment will be done by the Assessment Associate.

5. Released time support will continue for members of the Campus Assessment Committees through Spring 1999.

6. Released time support will be provided for faculty members designated by departments/disciplines/programs to supervise assessment beginning with the Spring 1999 semester and continuing thereafter.

7. There is a need for a working budget for pilot projects associated with assessment of General Education and for the continuing assessment of General Education..

8. Budget items need to be created for the following activities:
   - Expanded entry-level assessment for placement;
   - Line and code for each department/program/service to cover assessment initiatives such as student surveys, follow-ups surveys, employer surveys, community surveys, software, additional printing, etc.

9. There will be expenditures associated with the necessary actions to provide for external assessment of the institutional plan for assessment.

D. Supervision of Assessment

As with any college activity requiring the expenditure of financial and manpower resources, there must be accountability for the process of assessment.

1. The Assessment Associate and Coordinator of Assessment will cooperate to prepare an annual report on institutional assessment. This report will be authorized by the District Assessment Council and delivered to the Vice Chancellor, the Leadership Team, the College Academic Council, and the College Institutional Affairs Council by August 15.

   - The report will include, but not be limited to, the following:
     - the results and the use of results of the General Education skill area assessed during the previous school year
     - the results of other program assessments
     - the results of course assessments by learning units
     - suggestions for deactivation of programs.
     - summary of participation in classroom assessments and examples of use for improvement of learning.
   - Copies will be available at the following locations:
     - the office of the Vice Chancellor of Education
     - the offices of the Assessment Associate and the Coordinator of Assessment
     - the executive dean's office at each campus
     - each campus library resource room
     - all campus centers for teaching and learning
     - the district website

2. Beginning with the 1998-99 academic year, capital budget requests must be justified by assessment results.

3. Beginning with the 1998-99 academic year, new course proposals and new program proposals must include clearly defined learner outcomes and objectives and a means for assessing those outcomes and objectives.

4. Beginning in September 1998 all advertisements for the hiring of new faculty or academic administrators will include a statement about expectations regarding assessment and participation in the assessment process•. Divisions and departments will be encouraged to include the issue of assessment in the interview process.

5. Beginning with FY'01, the results of assessment will be reflected in budgetary and strategic planning expenditures.

• The following example is taken from the advertisement of the English Department at Meramec for positions for the academic year 1998-99: "We teach ....and participate in curriculum development and assessment....We prefer combinations of the following: community-college teaching experience; coursework and/or background in composition/rhetoric/writing theory/assessment/in reading/learning theory...etc."

St. Louis Community College

Joseph P. Cosand Community College Center
300 South Broadway
St. Louis, MO 63102-2810
314/539-5000 • FAX 314/539-5170

Appendix A

December 20, 1996

Dr. Steven Crow
North Central Association of
Colleges and Schools
159 N. Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Steve:

I am pleased to enclose the St. Louis Community College report of progress on the assessment plan. It reflects the substantial activity across the College which is moving us toward the integration of assessment systemically.

As we discussed previously, many activities existed, but they were not well documented. However, St. Louis Community College has used the requirement for the Plan and this report as an opportunity to significantly involve more faculty. This is creating the faculty responsibility and ownership for the Assessment Plan and its successful implementation.

The attached report fulfills the requirements identified in your January 23, 1996 letter. Please contact me should you need further information.

Sincerely,

Patricia C. Donohue, Ph.D.
Vice Chancellor for Education

Attachment

J:Donohue\scrow.doc

St. Louis Community College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution

ST. LOUIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Assessment Plan 1996

INTRODUCTION

St. Louis Community College submitted its NCA Assessment Plan in June of 1995. In January of 1996, we were notified that our plan had been rejected by two of three Commission Consultant-Evaluators. The letter notifying us of this action also requested that we submit an update in December of 1996.

Since our last NCA accreditation review, a number of college-wide initiatives have developed which have moved us closer to our goal of systemic assessment of student learning. The following timeline shows significant activities that have impacted assessment:

1988

- DACUM process begun in career programs
- Committee appointed to review and revise program evaluation

1992

- First attempt to review programs and departments district-wide
- Board of Trustees approve Chancellor's Goals, Vision of Success
- College develops a set of mission-driven goals as part of annual Institutional Effectiveness assessment
- Board of Trustees adopt policy requiring that all graduating students participate in some form of exit assessment
- American College Testing's CAAP (Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency) was implemented district-wide as an exit test for graduates
- District-wide mission review process completed
- State funding becomes increasingly tied to outcomes such as number of graduates, number of minority graduates, transfer rates, job placement rates

1993

- Mission-driven goals approved by Board of Trustees

1994

- College engages in strategic planning process with broad-based internal and external representation

- College-wide Entry Assessment Task Force formed to move college to a common entry assessment
- Florissant Valley begins *Instructional Skills Workshops*
- Staff development plan accepted by Board of Trustees

1995

- Accuplacer adopted as common instrument for entry assessment
- Internal and external scans are conducted as part of strategic planning
- Board of Trustees approves strategic planning directions and goals
- General Education Task Force formed
- Committee meets to develop NCA Assessment Plan for submission to NCA in June 1995
- State Funding for Results (FFR) projects implemented as part of a statewide initiative to improve teaching and learning
- Integration of academics project begun, focused on entry skills and exit outcomes
- Staff development coordinators appointed at all locations to begin college-wide coordination of staff development

1996

- College Assessment Plan not approved by NCA
- District-wide Assessment Council formed to revise plan and create strategies to move college further in assessment of student academic achievement
- Faculty leaders in assessment developed by conferences and workshops
- General Education Task Force shares proposed outcomes with college community
- Faculty are involved district-wide in developing common course profiles including objectives and expected student outcomes
- FFR projects are implemented for a second year

Description and Analysis of the Impact of Changes

The timeline suggests change in assessment occurring in three areas: in institutional orientation, in program, curriculum, course development and review, and in assessment strategies. The following will describe events on the timeline, analyze the impact of change, and evaluate the significance for future directions.

A number of events occurring at the institutional level within the past ten years have re-focused the College on learning. This shift of focus to organizational outcomes has led to increased emphasis on the importance of student academic achievement. The Chancellor's Goals, mission review, mission-driven goals, strategic planning, and the development of an assessment plan for NCA have reflected and encouraged this shift. Changes in funding at the state level have supported this movement. For the most part, however, this shift is based on the good educational practice that has guided the District in the development of indirect and informal measures of student learning in years prior to 1988. This good practice guided career programs and individual faculty members prior to the use of the word "assessment". This has been particularly true of programs whose graduates must pass a licensure exam to be employed in their field of study. The institutional shift challenges the organization to engage in a systemic change that creates a more learner-focused institution that continually assesses the attainment of learning goals and student achievement. (Strategic Planning Directions and Goals). District-wide, broad-based participation in mission review, in establishing mission-driven goals, in strategic planning and in development of an assessment plan has drawn faculty and staff together to discuss issues related to outcomes and assessment. These discussions have-led to better understanding, increased cooperation and the evolution of a district-wide culture. This shift in institutional focus and the increased opportunities to engage in discussion and faculty development across the District have helped set the stage for assessment's acceptance and emergence as a tool to improve student academic achievement.

From the late 1980's the College has been involved in competency based education at the program, curriculum and course levels. The DACUM (DEveloping A CUrriculuM) process, program review, the development of general education outcomes, and the development of course profiles are highlighted in the timeline as activities related to assessment. Other activities more limited in scope have also focused on student competency and the achievement of competency. Work on developing Tech-Prep relationships and the Integration of Academics project in the mid 1990s also emphasized the development of student competencies. The first step in the process was identification of entry skill requirements and exit outcomes. In particular, the college-wide integration of academics project, under the auspices of tech prep, has resulted in the first effort to develop competencies for academic courses, in this case BIO: 111, CHM: 101, COM: 101, ENG: 101, MTH: 140 and PHY: 101.

THE DACUM PROCESS

The College began using the DACUM process in 1988 as a means to establish competencies for career programs. The process calls upon practitioners in a career field to identify the skills, knowledge, and personal traits needed to perform an entry-level job. After supervisors and practitioners review and validate the information, faculty review and revise the curriculum as necessary to include the competencies which define expected student outcomes. Since 1988, the College has used this process to revise career programs, college wide and to develop new curricula. Our participation in the DACUM process has produced a number of benefits: faculty have learned of current practices in their fields, curricula were revised, and students have been better prepared to enter the workforce. Moreover, sponsoring DACUM reviews has enhanced the College's image

and relationships with employers and laid the groundwork for future partnerships. Because the DACUM process was college wide, it established a model of college-wide cooperation. It created the philosophical environment which made future discussion of course outcomes as part of assessment more possible, and it established a model for outcomes. DACUM is a practical model that continues to be used to update curriculum and to develop new curriculum.

THE PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

Historically, the College used a program evaluation process, which was administered independently by each campus. In 1988, this process was revised to include more objective information about staffing and enrollment, as well as career programs' progress toward development of competencies. In 1992, financial duress led to a new kind of program evaluation which dealt exclusively with statistical information--enrollment, graduates, faculty FTE, and costs. For this review, the College identified 15 very small programs (based on total college-wide enrollment); this was the first attempt to review programs college-wide. The results of this initiative led to some program combination (Child Care and Child Development), designation of a district-wide language coordinator and eventual addition of full-time language instructors at the two campuses without them, and to elimination of the dental laboratory technology program (for lack of enrollment). In the case of engineering, the original review was continued into the next year and led to the creation of a college-wide engineering department.

In the fall of 1992, the program evaluation process was revised again to incorporate the kinds of detailed statistical data used in this focused process. The College then embarked on its first widespread attempt to review career programs and academic departments college wide and created a schedule to review all programs within three years. The process was decentralized to the extent that each campus was responsible for administering surveys to its students, former students, and employers (for career programs) for collection of opinions and data. The process foundered over this step, and, while a few single-campus career programs completed the review, very few College-wide reviews were completed. This initial District-wide department activity demonstrated the need for collaboration on curriculum and program development which has been built in to many many processes. Currently the program review process is on hold as the college develops a new process. When it has been successful, program review has contributed to institutional effectiveness. It has evolved into a district-wide effort, and it has begun to incorporate competency development and outcomes into its model. Future program reviews will include evaluation of how assessment is used to improve student academic achievement.

THE GENERAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE

The General Education Task Force began its work in 1995 in a college-wide effort to define competencies and outcomes with a potential for curriculum reform for general education. Currently, this task force is examining appropriate assessment models. Because general education cuts across curriculum and campuses, it has brought faculty into the discussion of competencies and assessment. The general education task force has

shared its work with the assessment council. In the near future, a committee will propose assessment options for general education outcomes recommended by the task force. A final report is due to the Chancellor in June 1997 with implementation beginning fall 1997.

COURSE PROFILES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the course level, faculty across the district have been charged to develop course profiles by September 1997. Agreed upon course outcomes are part of these profiles. These outcomes will provide a common framework for faculty to assess student academic achievement.

The college has begun adding more formal assessment strategies to the informal strategies it has used for many years. In a systemic way, direct measures were limited to performance on national licensure tests for career students. Other direct measures were used by individual instructors but often not shared with colleagues. The Internal Scan written for Strategic Planning and published in September 1995, reported on numerous teaching strategies and innovations, experiments, work with learning styles of students, and evaluations of innovations. (See pages 15 - 21.) The process of developing measurable outcomes through previously described activities over the past ten years provides a systemic framework for instructors to develop direct assessment strategies addressing some common outcomes. Participation in the State Funding for Results projects has encouraged faculty to evaluate innovative teaching and learning methodologies. In recent years through staff development, a number of activities related to classroom assessment have been conducted in the College. Such activities include the study of Angelo and Cross' *Classroom Assessment Techniques* begun at the Florissant Valley campus in 1990, Instructional Skills Workshops begun in May 1994 with 80 faculty participating to date, and Small Group Instructional Feedback begun in 1995. It is clear that many individual instructors and teams of instructors have been active in assessing student learning and in "closing the loop" or modifying their instruction as a result of assessment. This has been done individually or in small groups in the past. The movement now is for assessment to become more systemic and systematic.

EXIT TESTING

Exit testing of graduates was an outgrowth of the District's participation in ACT's Project Cooperation during the early 1990s. The CAAP test became the instrument used district wide for this exit assessment of general education outcomes. Students are asked to take one component of the test: reading, writing, math, critical thinking, or scientific reasoning. The use of the CAAP test has had its limitations and will be examined in relationship to the emerging general education outcomes to determine if it fits that model.

ENTRY TESTING

In 1988, all three campuses used different initial placement tests. In 1994, a college-wide Entry Assessment Task Force, made up of the College's assessment managers and faculty department chairs from English, reading and mathematics from each campus, was formed in order to move the College to a common entry assessment. As the College developed common outcomes, and competencies, it became apparent that a common entry

assessment was needed. The task force decided to move from paper and pencil testing to the Accuplacer, a computerized placement test. Accuplacer is scheduled as part of operations in January 1997. Validation studies and refinement of cut off scores will occur within the first year of use. Accuplacer and other forms of computerized testing for assessment will evolve as faculty plans are developed to measure student academic achievement using these tools.

THE ASSESSMENT COUNCIL

In August of 1996, the college formed the assessment council as recommended in the 1995 NCA Assessment Plan. The assessment council was intentionally heavily weighted with faculty who were the driving force in the development of the plan. Mary S. Lauburg, the chair of the council, is a full-time faculty member on a one-year assignment as an administrative intern in the vice chancellor for education's office. Facilitating the work of the assessment council has been her major responsibility this semester. Through weekly meetings and assigned study, the Council developed an assessment plan designed to create a culture of assessment, to generate systemic and systematic assessment of student learning, and to feed information back to faculty for the improvement of courses, curriculums and programs. The Council addressed general faculty awareness and faculty development in its recommendations, with initial implementation planned for spring 1997. Detail on Council formation and process appears later in this report..

Significance for Future Directions

Over the ten year period, assessment in this district has progressed from individual instructor initiatives toward a more systemic and systematic approach to the assessment of student learning. Much attention has been paid to shifting the thinking towards outcomes and student learning. It is critical that the culture continues to shift in that direction. Much effort has been expended in the development of acceptable competencies and outcomes to provide the benchmarks for measurement of achievement. A major accomplishment has been the acceptance of common entry and exit tests. Faculty awareness has been raised as to the importance of assessing student achievement through a variety of means. Future efforts include greater faculty involvement in the assessment process. As of this writing, the goal of the District-wide Assessment Council is to strengthen the assessment plan by integrating those elements that have been successful for the College with direct assessment strategies which will involve more faculty, and by structuring methods for the use of the knowledge gained through assessment into the improvement of teaching and learning.

INTEGRATION OF ACADEMICS PROJECT, 1994-1996

In the fall of 1994, the College began a process to bring the general education faculty into the tech prep project for the articulation of well-prepared students from high schools. It called for teams of faculty members in six fundamental general education areas that most affect the career programts--biology, communications, chemistry, English, mathematics, and physics. The teams were charged with three basic tasks:

- Developing entry and exit competencies for the basic college-level course in their respective departments
- Determining the current degree--if any--of integration between general education and career courses
- Communicating to high school faculty the expected entry-level skills

During the spring semester, the teams worked independently but in similar ways. They questioned members of their own departments about integration with career areas, as well as about what instructors expected of entering students. They also questioned their colleagues about the competencies students gained by successful completion of the basic course. And they questioned instructors in the career programs about the degree to which they incorporated general education into their specific career courses.

The six reports all included entry and exit competencies for the basic course, a determination of the current amount of integration between courses, recommendations about ways to increase that level of integration, and especially in some reports, clear evidence of a lot of serious consideration and thinking about how we are educating students and how we need to make some changes.

While the original intent of this project was to focus on the degree of integration between career and academic courses, much of what the teams learned and made recommendations about was integration among the general education areas themselves. A running theme through all the reports is the need to help students see that their courses, career or general education, are not isolated subjects but constitute a network of knowledge and skills that support each other and all of which are required for understanding of and success in late-Twentieth-Century America, whatever work the students ultimately do. We need to demonstrate this relationship by using math problems from the physical world, by expecting competent oral presentations in chemistry, by assigning technical subjects in composition classes, and by requiring written lab reports in biology.

Several specific recommendations of the six reports stand out. Most clearly, all the reports (except math, which is limited to discussion of the math curriculum) stated that the most important entry competency necessary for student success in the basic course is abililty to read at the college level or close to it. Several also pointed out that students must also be able to understand and use the features of the textbook such as the index, glossary, and format elements such as bold print and highlighted sections.

The second most important competency is writing. Most of the reports stated specifically that students should be ready for Eng: 101, that is able to write at the college-entry level. The purpose was to define what "ready for Eng: 101" means so that high schools could work on that while we work on other issues. The last common recommendation of these reports was that in general there should be more integration between the communication skill courses--English composition and oral communication--and other general education courses and career courses. Instructors of courses other than composition and oral communication should incorporate writing and speaking into their courses as part of the teaching/learning of the specific subject, and they should evaluate students in these areas

and help them improve. In turn, instructors of English composition and oral communication courses should make written or oral assignments on technical, mathematical, or scientific subjects to reinforce the relationship between a subject itself and the methodology of communicating about it.

Each team reported entry and exit competencies for the basic college-level course in its area. In the fall of 1995, the faculty involved in this project met with high school representatives in three separate sessions: English and communications, mathematics, and sciences. The faculty members presented the results of their study, especially the entry-level competencies suggested for the basic course in the subject. For the most part, these were frank, informative meetings in which faculty from the College and the high schools engaged in enthusiastic conversation about the requirements of the college course and its relationship with what the high schools are doing. There was little dissension from the high school representatives about the competencies we presented.

Each of the individual reports contained specific recommendations, many of which are directed at faculty in the career program or academic area. But because of the pervasiveness of some of the recommendations, as well as the importance of this project, Ann Divine and Marcia Pfeiffer, the project directors, made these general recommendations, based on their reading of the written reports and discusssion of the oral ones.

- The College needs to develop some procedure to assure that students are able to read at a high enough level to have a reasonable chance of success in basic college courses.
- The College needs to institute a writing across the curriculum program.
- The faculty in career programs and in general education departments need to establish a closer relationship. One way would be to assign faculty members as liaisons between the two.
- Instructors of English composition and oral communications should expand their range of assignments to incorporate more technical, mathematical, and scientific subjects.
- Instructors of career and general education courses should incorporate oral and written communication into their teaching and evaluation of students.
- The staff development coordinators need to develop some training for instructors that will prepare them more and make them more confident about their ability to implement these recommendations, especially bullets 2,4 and 5.

The original project has developed into several others. Most closely connected to assessment is the development of pre-tests during the summer, 1996. Faculty members in biology, communications, English and mathematics developed tests to determine whether the entry-level competencies recommended by the original teams are reasonable and valid. We gave these tests during the first week of the fall semester to students in the appropriate first college-level course. Using their performance on the test as an indication of their preparation and reviewing their performance in the course, we plan to test the validity of the entry-level competencies recommmended as necessary for success in the course

The integration of academics project has helped prepare faculty members for a new approach to assessment. For the first time, general education instructors had to think in terms of competencies and to codify them for students. It has provided an arena for faculty members to expand their thinking beyond what they provide students in their own courses and departments. This has been an opportunity to think about how the education the College provides--taken as a whole--affects students and their ability to succeed in their personal and their working lives. The people involved in this project have generated a great deal of excitement in the course of their thinking and talking with their colleagues. This project may have come to life under the auspices of the tech prep project, but it has opened a window on the fundamental mission of St. Louis Community College, indeed of all education.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

With the appointment of staff development coordinators at each of the campuses, the College moved closer to achieving its goal of systemic assessment. Some of the programs developed by the coordinators feature components of assessment and the faculty role.

The *Instructional Skills Workshop* (ISW) is a good example. This program, which began at Florissant Valley, is now being offered on all campuses. The ISW is a highly intense program, requiring that the participants spend 24 hours in the workshop. Usually the structure is four days of six hours each. Another element that contributes to its intensity is the small number of participants. A total of seven people, two facilitators and five "teachers" comprise the group. The facilitators teach the participants how to prepare a lesson using a particular format which has the following three aspects of assessment built in:

- writing effective, measurable objectives
- constructing a pre test
- constructing a post test

A fourth aspect of assessment--feedback--is built into the ISW structure. Each "teacher" must prepare three 10-minute lessons for presentation before the group. Afterward the participants who were the "learners" during that round give immediate feedback concerning the effectiveness of the presentation to the "teacher."

Participation in an ISW is voluntary. But since 1994 when they were first offered, more than 80 faculty/staff have completed the workshop.

Other programs which began on the Florissant Valley campus have also been replicated at the other campuses. They are now promoted by the staff development coordinators and faculty across the district can participate in them. Two which have a focus on classroom assessment are:

- Study of Angelo and Cross's *Classroom Assessment Techniques* began on the Florissant Valley campus in Fall 1990 and later at other campuses.

- *Small Group Instructional Feedback* (SGIF) began in 1995. In this format, two instructors pair off, visit each other's classes and talk to students, inform the instructor of students' suggestions for course improvements, and then the instructor discusses changes with the class. So far, 16 faculty members at Florissant Valley (and an unknown number on other campuses) have participated.

ASSESSMENT AND OTHER STAFF DEVELOPMENT

St. Louis Community College has taken a diversified approach in educating its faculty and staff about assessment. In addition to programs mentioned above, the college has encouraged faculty and staff to attend conferences, workshops and other activities related to assessment. Both faculty and staff have attended local, regional and national meetings which focus on assessment. Last summer, several faculty attended the AAHE Conference on Quality and Assessment. Other faculty attended a John Nichols workshop on assessment. Still other faculty and staff spent a week at Alverno College studying its assessment model. St. Louis Community College realizes that a variety of avenues must be open to faculty and staff to educate themselves in the area of assessment.

Other Assessment Activities

- Departments and individual instructors have assessed student learning in numerous ways. The College's 1995 Assessment Plan reported the results of a December 1994 survey on numerous types of assessment at entry, during attendance, exit from course, exit from program and follow up measures. Departments have done assessment work in relationship to a number of learning goals. For example, the English department at Florissant Valley is currently doing *bench marking* work with critical thinking in ENG: 102. However, in the past we usually did not share such work with colleagues at other campuses or in other departments.

- The *Internal Scan*, written for Strategic Planning and published in September 1995, reported on numerous teaching strategies and innovations, experiments, work with learning styles of students, and evaluation of innovations.

- Currently, instructors are working on a number of direct measures of student learning, including *portfolio assessment* and *externally reviewed exhibitions* in the arts. They are also assessing the success of numerous strategies, including *learning communities*. Other measures are being planned at this time; for example, at Meramec a *capstone experience* is being planned for the Honors Program.

It is clear that many individual instructors and teams of instructors have been active in assessing student learning--and in "closing the loop" or modifying their instruction as a result of their experiments. But this has been done individually or in small groups in the past. The movement now is to incorporate more systemic and systematic assessment.

Additional recent initiatives to enhance student learning include the following:

Movement to the Accuplacer entry assessment tool
Development of *Funding for Results* projects (FFR)
supplemental instruction

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cooperative learning
learning communities
Development of course profiles that has resulted in the identification of learning outcomes
Greater emphasis on developmental education in the district
Implementation of new initiatives aimed at helping the student learn better, such as the *Writing Across the Curriculum* which increase opportunities for student assessmen.
Increased number of classroom based research projects and greater use of institutional data
Greater demand for information from faculty working on projects
Greater emphasis on developmental education in the district
Development of outcome-based goals proposed by the Chancellor
Review and reform of General Education Initiative
Attempts to work with area high schools to assess preparation of students
Development of assessment component of the *Center for Student Success* at Florissant Valley.
Promotion of assessment by using a significant portion of staff development monies for that purpose
Emphasis on student learning through our Strategic Planning: Directions and Goals

THE FORMATION OF THE COLLEGE-WIDE ASSESSMENT COUNCIL

In August of 1996, the College formed the assessment council, as recommended in the 1995 NCA Assessment Plan, even though the plan was rejected by NCA. The assessment council was intentionally heavily weighted with faculty who were the driving force in the development of the plan. The composition of the committee was diverse. Twelve faculty, four from each campus served. Each faculty member was selected to represent one of four areas--transfer, general education, career, or developmental education. In addition to the faculty, three associate deans, one from each campus, served on the committee. Because of their expertise, three assessment personnel, one from each campus worked with the council. These individuals were appointed to the council by their campus presidents. The council also included members who represented other areas of the College. For example, one executive dean represented the District Curriculum Committee. In addition, the District's research and development director and another executive dean served as ex-officio members. Mary S. Lauburg, the chair of the council, is a full-time faculty member on a one-year assignment as an administrative intern in the vice chancellor for education's office. Facilitating the work of the assessment council has been her major responsibility this semester. With very few exceptions, the council met weekly during the semester. Lauburg led the members through a process which has resulted in an assessment plan designed to create a culture of assessment, to generate systemic and systematic assessment of student learning, and to provide feedback information to faculty for the improvement of courses, curriculums and programs.

The council was given a five-point charge:

- To promote broad understanding of assessment across the faculty and the institution

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- Encourage and facilitate staff development in assessment
- Develop a district strategy for systemic integration of assessment
- Monitor progress on systematic development of assessment practices across the college
- Monitor the implementation of assessment processes and the impact on student learning.

If the charge were to be fulfilled, Mary Lauburg knew that the council would have to embark on a process of educating itself about assessment so that every member had the same understanding of what was meant by the term assessment. Lauburg initiated the process of education by incorporating a review of current assessment literature and by using formal presentations.

The second stage of the process called for dividing the council into subcommittees and having each subcommittee work on a specific portion of the charge. The council was divided into three subcommittees two of which were chaired by faculty. The third was chaired by an assessment person because his expertise in assessment was considered an asset. Subcommittee #1, with its faculty chair, worked on items #1 and 2 of the charge. The members of that subcommittee saw an intimate connection between these items and requested that they be given both. Subcommittee #2, with its faculty chair, worked on item #3 of the charge. Everyone saw this item as the major work of the committee, for this group would produce the actual model to be used and the plan for implementation. Subcommittee #3 worked on items #4 and 5, seeing the close connection between what was required to fulfill them. During discussions at weekly meetings, the work of the subcommittees was refined and accepted. The assessment system developed contains three major components:

- A plan promoting faculty education and development in assessment
- A model for initiating assessment to be used throughout the college
- A time line for monitoring the development of systemic assessment and for monitoring the plan itself

The third stage of the assessment council's work to fulfill its charge is promoting college-wide acceptance and use of assessment. This stage begins with educating the faculty about assessment, including staff development activities to illustrate various assessment practices and techniques. The council will begin this process opening week of spring semester with a visit to each division in the college. There, council members will speak to faculty of the importance of assessment to our students and our institution. At that time, council members will also distribute a question and answer handout they developed and the plan itself. This faculty education/development stage of the council's plan will culminate with a faculty development event where departments or disciplines are enabled to develop assessment strategies and activities appropriate to their own discipline.

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SUMMARY

At st. Louis Community College there has been much activity centering on assessment of student learning and achievement of academic outcomes. With full College support, faculty and staff have done much to educate themselves in the area of assessment. New programs and staff development opportunities have spread throughout the district encouraging as many faculty as wish to do so to participate in these activities. Finally, we have developed the attached assessment model which will propel us further along toward achieving our goal of systematic and systemic assessment. This faculty-owned assessment plan completely describes the next steps to be taken in the process. The plan provides systmatic implementation across the College by 1999, although all faculty and programs have activites which have begun already.

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Time Line for Implementation of Assessment of Student Academic Achievement, Fall 1996 through Spring 1999.

The Assessment Plan will be implemented in three phases in order to establish a firm culture of assessment among the faculty and academic staff in this multi-campus, multi-dimensional, comprehensive community college district.

PHASE ONE:

Fall 1996

The First District Assessment Council, as described on page 13 of the 1995 Assessment Plan, is established with 12 faculty representatives, 4 professional assessment staff representatives and 4 academic deans from the three campuses and chaired by a faculty member on administrative intern assignment. Vice-Chancellor Patricia Donohue gives the Council the charge to develop a broad-based understanding of assessment of student academic achievement as a process, including formative and summative measures of learning, progress toward objectives, analysis of performance measures, and improvements in learning design. The Council holds weekly meetings during Fall 1996. The agenda and minutes from each meeting are included in Appendix B. The Council submits its Assessment Plan to the College Leadership Team for approval by December 1996. The approval process will include open review for all college faculty and academic staff.

The Council will:

- Promote broad understanding of assessment across the faculty and the institution.
- Encourage and facilitate staff development in assessment.
- Develop a district strategy for systemic integration of assessment.
- Monitor progress on systematic development of assessment practices across the College.
- Monitor the implementation of assessment processes and the impact on student learning.

The process for developing full course profiles begins for all courses in the district. All course profiles are to be completed and submitted to the District Curriculum Committee by August 1997.

Spring 1997

1. During opening week, January 1997, the College Assessment Plan will be distributed college wide. The Assessment Council members will conduct informational sessions during regularly scheduled division meetings.

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2. During February 1997, each campus forms its Campus Assessment Committee (CAsCom), which will report like a subcommittee to its appropriate campus governance body and to the District Assessment Council. The membership, functions, and reporting relationships of this committee and the other assessment bodies (District Assessment Council (DAC), and Assessment Unit (AU) are described on pages 19-21 and displayed in the chart on page 22.

3. The current District Assessment Council prepares a plan for transition into the model of the College Assessment Plan in collaboration with the campus governance bodies.

4. The Council identifies assessment units in thirds. These Assessment Units (AU's) may include such areas as developmental education, general education, honors, and other cross-disciplinary departments and programs. The Units form their assessment bodies during February and March 1997. Campus Assessment Committees confirm identification of Assessment Units (AU's).

5. The Council establishes guidelines and parameters for Unit assessment plans. The guidelines are described on pages 23 and 24.

6. All Assessment Units define which student academic achievement outcomes will be assessed at course level as articulated in course profiles. Emphasis in the first round of assessment will be on the high-enrollment, general education, and basic skills courses such as American History I, College Composition I, and Basic Mathematics.

7. Staff Development in cooperation with the District Assessment Council initiates assessment training for staff and faculty. The training will be ongoing at District and campus levels. Staff Development days in spring 1997 will be devoted to faculty and staff involvement and responsibilities in assessment.

8. All Units complete Course Profiles by August 1997.

Fall 1997

1. All units identify and describe assessment tools and report to Campus Assessment Committees; the first 1/3 of AU's by October 15, remainder by December 20. Assessment tools should encompass a diversity of formal and informal measures that will provide an accurate and multidimensional picture of cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning. For example, they may range from a variety of classroom assessment techniques to standardized tests. The Units prepare their assessment plans according to parameters and guidelines set by the District Assessment Council and described on pages 19 and 20.

2. The Campus Assessment Committees assist the Assessment Units in the details of choosing and developing appropriate assessment methods, administration of assessment, collection, analysis and reporting of results according to the Five-Column Model (Appendix A).

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3. Campus Assessment Committees approve Assessment Unit plans for first 1/3 Assessment Units by October 15, according to the guidelines adopted in the Spring 1997.

4. Staff Development continues assessment training.

5. First 1/3 of Assessment Units initiate assessment and collect data.

PHASE TWO:

Spring 1998

1. The first 1/3 of the Assessment Units analyze and interpret data on student performance in high-enrollment, general education, and basic skills courses such as American History I, College Composition I, and Basic Mathematics, and begin implementation of steps to improve teaching and learning. At this point, the feedback loop of the Five-Column Model is accomplished. Units submit written summary report to Campus Assessment Committee by April 1.

2. Approve Assessment Units plans or second round of the assessment cycle by March 1.

3. The second 1/3 of Assessment Units initate assessment and collect data.

4. By May 1, the District Assessment Council affirms units to be included in the final third of Assessment Unit cycle. At this stage, units that have not yet fully engaged in the assessment process will be included. By this stage the Assessment Plan will include all programs and curricula.

Fall 1998

1. The second 1/3 of Assessment Units analyze student performance data and implement results to improve teaching and learning. These Assessment Units submit a written summary report to their respective Campus Assessment Committees by November 1, documenting strengths, weaknesses, and plans for improving performance. At this point, the feedback loop of the Five-Column Model is accomplished.

2. Third 1/3 of Assessment Units initiate assessment and collect data.

3. The first 1/3 of the Assessment Units begin renewal cycle of assessment according to guidelines set by the District Assessment Council.

4. The Campus Assessment Committees submit summaries of the Assessment Unit reports to the District Assessment Council.

5. The District Assessment Council compiles the results of the Campus Assessment Committee summaries for institutional purposes, annual reports, and possible changes in the assessment process.

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PHASE THREE:

Spring 1999

1. The second 1/3 of the Assessment Units begin renewal cycle of assessment per guidelines and parameters set by District Assessment Council.

2. The third 1/3 of the Assessment Units analyze, and interpret data, and plan implementation of teaching and learning improvements. The units submit a written summary report to Campus Assessment Committee by April 1.

By May 1999, all academic areas of the College will be implementing ongoing, regular assessment of student learning. Assessment will be integrated in routine College functions. A time line displaying the phasing cycle follows. The Assessment Renewal Plan becomes the ongoing time line

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TIME LINE
Assessment Plan Implementation

Fall 1996	Spring 1997	Fall 1997	Spring 1998	Fall 1998	Spring 1999
District Assessment Council is formed Beginning of course profile development	Approval of Assessment Plan Assessment Plan will be distributed college wide Transition plans are made for formation of new Council & Campus Committees (February) Assessment committees are formed (February & March) Council sets guidelines and parameters Campus Assessment Committees identify Assessment Units for each round of the assessment cycle Outcomes are identified across the board Faculty/staff assessment training All Assessment Units complete Course Profiles by August Staff Development Days used for assessment training	Campus Assessment Committees approve Unit plans for first 1/3 Assessment Units by October 15 All Assessment Units identify outcomes to be measured and describe assessment tools. Report to Campus Assessment Committees: 1st third by October 15, remaining by Dec. 20 First 1/3 of Assessment Units initiate assessment and collect data Staff Development continues during Service Days	First 1/3 of Assessment Units analyze and interpret data on student performance in high enrollment general education and basic skills courses. Units report to Campus Assessment Committees by March 1 Campus Assessment Committees approve plans for second 1/3 of Assessment Units by March 1. Second 1/3 of Assessment Units initiate assessment and collect data. By May 1, District Assessment Council identifies Units to be included in the final 1/3 of the Assessment Unit cycle.	Second 1/3 Assessment Units analyze data & implement results to improve teaching and learning; written report to Campus Assessment Committee by November 1 Third 1/3 of Assessment Units initiate assessment and collect data First 1/3 of the Assessment Units begin assessment renewal cycle per guidelines and parameters set by District Assessment Council	Second 1/3 of Assessment Units begin renewal cycle of assessment per guidelines and parameters set by District Assessment Council Third 1/3 Assessment Units analyze data & implement results to improve teaching and learning; written report to Campus Assessment Commmittee by April 1

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Assessment Plan Structure

The structure of the College Assessment Plan has three categories of assessment bodies:

- DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COUNCIL
- CAMPUS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
- ASSESSMENT UNIT (e.g., department, division, program, general education, developmental education, honors, admissions, counseling/advising, campus president's council, etc.)

In the first two assessment bodies, the faculty will be a majority of the membership. The **District Assessment Council** will have College-wide responsibility while **the Campus Assessment Committees** will have only campus-wide responsibility. An **Assessment Unit** is a district-wide group whenever feasible. It may have College-wide responsibility, campus-wide responsibility, or less than campus-wide responsibility depending on the definition of the unit. The primary role of the District-wide Assessment Council and the Campus-wide Assessment Committee will be to provide leadership, support, facilitate, and monitor the assessment activities of the Assessment Units. The College will designate a Director of Assessment to attend to the institutional functions of the Assessment Plan.

I. DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COUNCIL

A. Functions

1. Identifies College-wide Assessment Units
2. Establishes lengths of assessment cycles
3. Assures comprehensive implementation of assessment
4. Sets guidelines for Unit Assessment Plans
5. Monitors Unit Assessment Plans
6. Compiles Unit Assessment Plan result summaries
7. Coordinates District with Campus Assessment
8. Educates Assessment Units about the assessment process
9. Recommends modifications in the assessment process

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10. Reports like a subcommittee to the College Academic Council
11. Reports to the Vice Chancellor for Education

B. Membership—7 Total (Chaired by a faculty member)*

1. Three (3) faculty designated from each Campus Assessment Committee
2. Three (3) chairs of Campus Assessment Committee
3. One Director of Assessment

II. CAMPUS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

A. Functions

1. Identifies Campus Assessment Units
2. Monitors Assessment Unit schedules
3. Establishes lengths of assessment cycles
4. Establishes resource guidelines for Unit Assessment Plans; assures compliance with District guidelines, parameters, time lines
5. Assists Units in administration of assessment tools
6. Coordinates campus with District assessment
7. Collects and summarizes Assessment Unit Plans/Results
8. Educates Assessment Units about the assessment process
9. Recommends changes in the assessment process
10. Summarizes Assessment Unit results in report to District Assessment Council

B. Membership—11-12 Total (Chaired by Faculty member)

1. Research information specialist
2. Assessment person
3. Eight (8) faculty (no two from same department)
4. One Academic Associate Dean
5. One student

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III. ASSESSMENT UNIT

A. Function

1. Develops profiles, goals, objectives, assessment methods/tools for courses, clusters, or programs
2. Creates a Unit Assessment Plan consistent with guidelines and parameters set by District Assessment Council and the Five-Column Model
3. Administers assessment plan
4. Collects assessment data and analyzes results
5. Writes summary of assessment results, documenting strengths, weaknesses, and plans for improving teaching and learning (completion of Five-Column Model)
6. Submits written summary report to appropriate Campus Assessment Committee
7. Implements appropriate changes in performance (feedback loop)

B. Membership—all faculty and appropriate staff in the Assessment Unit

***Membership may change based on input from campus presidents and governance bodies.**

NOTE: Assessment results will not be a part of Faculty evaluation

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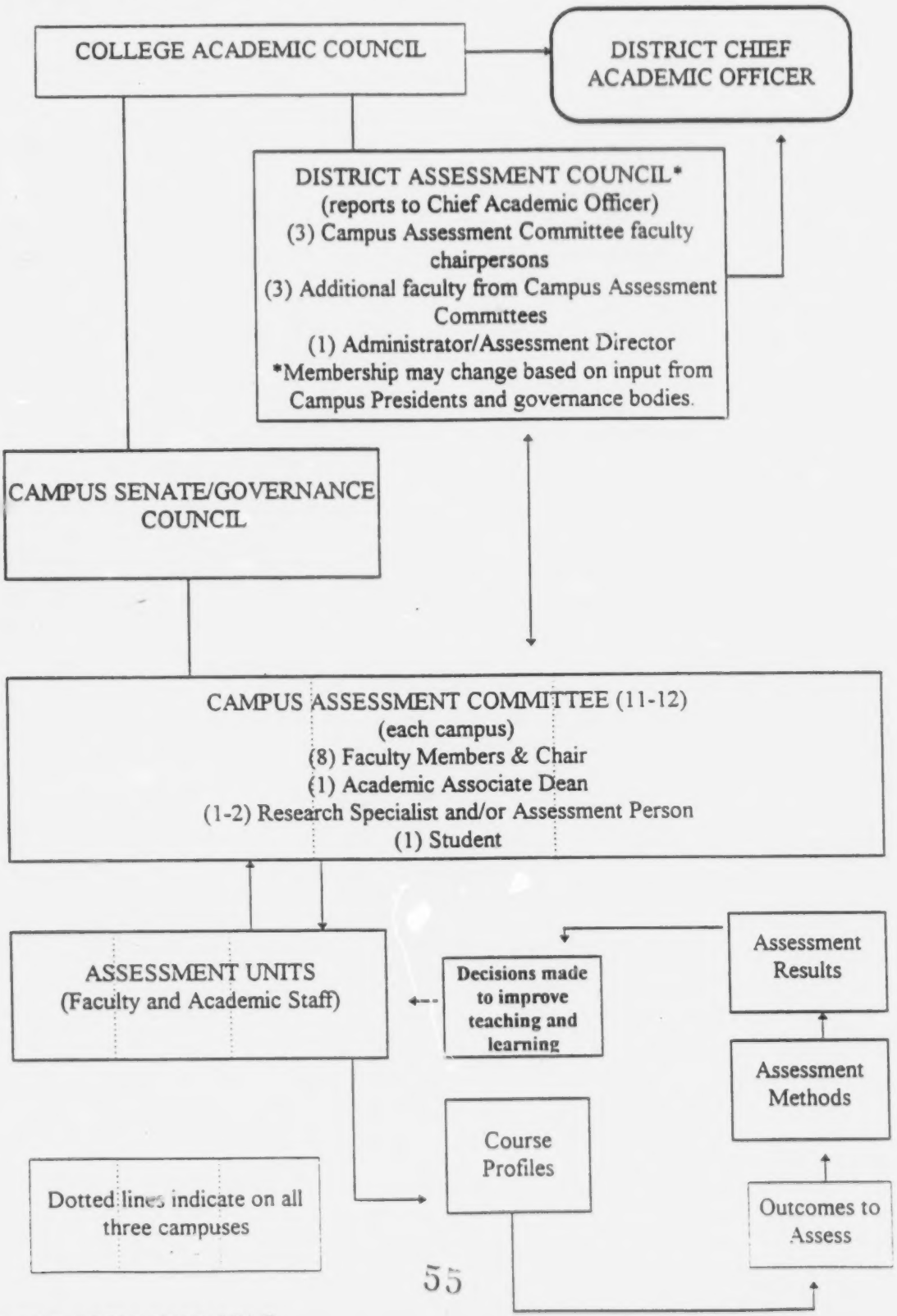
Assessment Bodies Organization Chart


COLLEGE ACADEMIC COUNCIL
DISTRICT CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER
DISTRICT ASSESSMENT COUNCIL*
(reports to Chief Academic Officer)
(3) Campus Assessment Committee faculty chairpersons
(3) Additional faculty from Campus Assessment Committees
(1) Administrator/Assessment Director
*Membership may change based on input from Campus Presidents and governance bodies.
CAMPUS SENATE/GOVERNANCE COUNCIL
CAMPUS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (11-12)
(each campus)
(8) Faculty Members & Chair
(1) Academic Associate Dean
(1-2) Research Specialist and/or Assessment Person
(1) Student
ASSESSMENT UNITS
(Faculty and Academic Staff)
Decisions made to improve teaching and learning
Assessment Results
Assessment Methods
Course Profiles
Outcomes to Assess
Dotted lines indicate on all three campuses

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Guidelines for Unit Assessment of

Student Academic Achievement Plans

Each Assessment Unit must submit an assessment plan which addresses the following questions to the appropriate Campus Assessment Committee (CAsCom.) by (date)_____. Upon approval by the CAsCom., the Unit is to implement the plan and submit its assessment report to the CAsCom. by (date)_____.

Department/Program/Unit:_____.

1. Is this Unit represented on each main campus?
2. Describe how appropriate faculty and staff district wide were involved in designing the plan.
3. What key quality or success indicators does the Unit intend to assess?
4. How are the indicators related to the College mission, the purpose(s) of the Unit?
5. Why were the indicators selected? To which learning domains (affective, cognitive, behavioral) are the indicators related? (The plan should include the appropriate Course Profiles which indicate how each of the Expected Performance Outcomes will be assessed.)
6. What measures (instruments) and standards will be used to assess each indicator?
7. How will the results be collected? What steps/processes are involved? Who is responsible? When will the collection occur? According to what time line?
8. How will the results be analyzed? By whom? When?
9. How will the results be reported? To whom? When?
10. How will the Unit use the results for improving teaching and learning?
11. How will the results be included in the budget building process?

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The Campus Assessment Committee (CAsCom.) will evaluate the Assessment Unit (A.U.) plan based on the completeness of the answers to the preceding questions and based on the plan's meeting the following criteria:

1. Yes/No Does the plan include multiple measures of the expected learning outcomes?
2. Yes/No Does the plan measure multiple dimensions of learning outcomes?
3. Yes/No Does the time line for the plan allow for annual reporting?
4. Yes/No Does the plan give evidence of faculty participation in designing, implementing, analyzing, using, and reporting the results of the plan?
5. Yes/No Does the plan show evidence of faculty acceptance?
6. Yes/No Does the plan describe the process by which the assessment results will be communicated to students and faculty?
7. Yes/No Does the plan explain how the results will be used to improve learning and teaching?
8. Yes/No Does the plan allow the CAsCom. to monitor the process?
9. Yes/No Does the assessment plan include the "primary" course or learning activity offered by the Unit?

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Appendix B: Reporting Forms

The following pages are forms to be used for reporting classroom assessment, designated learning outcomes and means of assessment, and plans for use of assessment results. The forms have been revised and augmented for the 1998-99 academic year. These forms should be reviewed annually to insure the effectiveness of recording the college's assessment efforts.

Attached:

To be submitted by individual faculty members each semester:

- Classroom Assessment Form

To be submitted by assessment units (programs, services, and academic units) each year:

- Form A Assessment Contact Sheet
- Form B Plan for Assessment
- Form C Assessment Results
- Form D Use of Assessment

It is anticipated that other forms in use throughout the college may need to be changed including:

- Forms related to the budgetary and strategic planning process
- Forms for the proposal of new courses and programs

To be submitted by individual faculty members each semester

COURSE/SECTION_____ SEMESTER_____

FACULTY MEMBER_____ CAMPUS_____

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT RECORD

1. What assessment procedure(s) did you use (empty outline, minute paper, muddiest point, concept map, etc.)

2. What effect did the results of this (these) assessment procedure(s) have on your teaching?

THE FOLLOWING FORMS ARE FOR USE BY ASSESSMENT UNITS, TO BE SUBMITTED ONCE EACH ACADEMIC YEAR BY:

CAREER PROGRAMS

COLLEGE SERVICES

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS

LEARNING UNITS

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Assessment Form A: Contact Sheet

_____

[CAREER PROGRAM]

List all degree(s) and/or certificates included in this assessment as they are listed in the College Catalog. Include the type of degree or certificate (AA,AAS, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Program Coordinator	Department
FV –	
FP –	
M --	

Note: the program coordinator is considered to the contact person for assessment purposes. Please indicate if someone else has been so designated:

_____

Assessment Committee Liaison _____

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form A: Assessment Contact Sheet

_____

[COLLEGE SERVICE]

Service director/supervisor	Dean/Administrator
FV –	
FP –	
M --	
CC –	

Note: the service director or supervisor is considered to the contact person for assessment purposes. Please indicate if someone else has been so designated:

_____

Assessment Liaison _____

CAMPUS COMMITTEE MEMBER or COORDINATOR OF ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form A: Assessment Contact Sheet

_____

[DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM]

Program Coordinator or Department Chairperson	Department
FV –	
FP –	
M –	

Note: the program coordinator is considered to the contact person for assessment purposes. Please indicate if someone else has been so designated:

_____

Assessment Committee Liaison _____

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

Form A: Assessment Contact Sheet

_____

[DEPARTMENT / DISCIPLINE / PROGRAM]

List all disciplines and departments included in this unit.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Department Chairperson	Associate Dean
FV –	
FP –	
M –	

Assessment person:

_____

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form B: Plan for Assessment

_____

[CAREER/DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM]

EXPANDED STATEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE

Mission: _____

_____

_____

Goal(s): _____

_____

INTENDED OUTCOME OR OBJECTIVE

Outcome: _____

_____

1a: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

1b: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

Outcome: _____

_____

2a: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

2b: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

Please continue on other side

Describe fully the plan for carrying out these assessments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Assessment instrument(s) to be used:

_____

_____

Target date for the collection of data: _____

Person in the program responsible for the assessment plan:

_____ phone # _____

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form B: Plan for Assessment

_____

[COLLEGE SERVICE]

EXPANDED STATEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE

Mission: _____

_____

_____

Goal(s): _____

_____

INTENDED OUTCOME OR OBJECTIVE

Outcome: _____

_____

1a: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

1b: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

Outcome: _____

_____

2a: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

2b: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

Please continue on other side

Describe fully the plan for carrying out these assessments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Assessment instrument(s) to be used:

_____

_____

Target date for the collection of data: _____

Person in college service responsible for the assessment plan:

_____ phone # _____

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

ASSESSMENT PERSON -- PHONE

Form B: Plan for Assessment

_____

[DEPARTMENT / DISCIPLINE / PROGRAM]

EXPANDED STATEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE

Mission: _____

_____

_____

Goal(s): _____

_____

INTENDED OUTCOME OR OBJECTIVE

Outcome: _____

_____

1a: Means of Assessment and criterion for success _____

_____

_____

1b: Means of Assessment and criterion for success: _____

_____

_____

Outcome: _____

_____

2a: Means of Assessment and criterion for success _____

_____

_____

2b: Means of Assessment and criterion for success _____

_____

_____

Describe fully the plan for carrying out these assessments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Assessment instrument(s) to be used: _____

_____

_____

Target date for the collection of data: _____

Courses/sections/campus in which the outcomes will be assessed:

Course number	Section(s)	Campus

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form C: Assessment Results

_____

[CAREER PROGRAM]

'Means of Assessment' # on Form B	Criterion of Success (from Form B)	ACTUAL RESULTS
1a		
1b		
2a		
2b		

Include copies of the actual data collected, if possible.

ANNUAL REQUIRED OUTCOMES

Outcome	DAC Criterion of Success	Actual Results
Employer Satisfaction		
Employment 180 days on		

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____

DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form C: Assessment Results

_____

[COLLEGE SERVICE]

'Means of Assessment' # on Form B	Criterion of Success (from Form B)	ACTUAL RESULTS
1a		
1b		
2a		
2b		

Include copies of the actual data collected, if possible.

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form C: Assessment Results

_____

[DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM]

'Means of Assessment' # on Form B	Criterion of Success (from Form B)	ACTUAL RESULTS
1a		
1b		
2a		
2b		

Include copies of the actual data collected, if possible.

ANNUAL REQUIRED OUTCOME:
STUDENT SUCCESS IN NEXT IN SEQUENCE COURSE

Transition	DAC Criterion of Success	ACTUAL RESULTS
Course ___:___ To Course ___:___		
Course ___:___ to Course ___:___		
Course ___:___ to Course ___:___		

Additional transitions to be recorded on reverse side

Transition	DAC Criterion of Success	ACTUAL RESULTS
Course ___:___ To Course ___:___		
Course ___:___ to Course ___:___		
Course ___:___ to Course ___:___		
Course ___:___ to Course ___:___		
Course ___:___ to Course ___:___		

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form C: Assessment Results

_____

[DEPARTMENT / DISCIPLINE / PROGRAM]

# of Means of Assessment on Form B	Criterion of Success (from Form B)	ACTUAL RESULTS
1a		
1b		
2a		
2b		

Include copies of the actual data collected, if possible.

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form D: Use of Assessment

_____

[CAREER/DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM –DEPARTMENT/DISCIPLINE]

Summarize the assessment results:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Indicate areas where improvement is needed as revealed by these results:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe the use of these results to improve the student learning:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Suggestions for next year's assessment plan:

_____

_____

_____

_____

ASSESSMENT YEAR _____ DATE SUBMITTED _____

SUBMITTED BY _____

Form D: Use of Assessment

_____

[COLLEGE SERVICE]

Summarize the assessment results:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Indicate areas where improvement is needed as revealed by these results:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe the use of these results to improve the service:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Suggestions for next year's assessment plan:

_____

_____

_____

_____

St. Louis Community College

Appendix C: SLCC Statement on

General Education

The purpose of general education at St. Louis Community College is to prepare students to:

1. **Live Effectively** by understanding and dealing constructively with the diversity of the contemporary world, a diversity manifested not only in ideas and ways of knowing, but also in populations and cultures;

2. **Learn Continuously** by constructing a coherent framework for ongoing intellectual, ethical, and aesthetic growth in the presence of such diversity;

3. **Work Productively** by enlarging their personal and vocational pathways, developing life long competencies such as critical and creative thinking, effective communication, and abilities to reason quantitatively and engage in substantive problem solving.

General Education Knowledge Areas

Humanities
Communications
Technology
Mathematics
Aesthetics
Ethical Development
International/Intercultural Perspectives
Wellness
Social Sciences
Behavioral Sciences
Citizenship
Applied Sciences
Natural Sciences/Environment

General Education Skill Areas

a. Think critically
b. Communicate effectively
c. Interact productively with others
d. Value and practice inquiry
e. Access, analyze, understand, and use information
f. Accept personal responsibility
g. Accept social responsibility
h. Appreciate aesthetic expression

Skill Area Outcomes

a. Think Critically

Definition: Critical thinking is inherent in logical reasoning and problem solving. One must value critical thinking in order to reason logically and solve problems. To think critically, one must understand the context of an idea and how it relates to the whole.

1. Integrate ideas: The student...

a) identifies, organizes, and defines ideas from various sources which are then analyzed and synthesized
b) examines his/her own viewpoint while also interpreting and integrating the ideas and beliefs of people from various cultures
c) presents ideas using correct vocabulary
d) recognizes how small tasks can be combined to perform larger tasks

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2. **Reflect ethically: The student...**
   a) identifies and analyzes his/her own values
   b) questions and critiques personal, societal, and cultural assumptions
   c) generates decisions based on rational and ethical analysis
   d) evaluates unpopular decisions for their value to the whole
   e) explores values related to social, political, economic, scientific, and technological developments

3. **Reason logically: The student...**
   a) recognizes both formal and informal arguments, their premises and conclusions
   b) distinguishes inductive from deductive arguments
   c) determines the strength or weakness of logical arguments
   d) formulates strong arguments
   e) examines supporting evidence and determines its relevance to a particular issue
   f) considers all sides to an issue or argument, using past experience, logical analysis, and fairness in assessing other viewpoints

4. **Solving Problems: The student ...**
   a) identifies, researches, and analyzes a problem
   b) uses inductive and/or deductive reasoning to solve the problem
   c) develops appropriate hypotheses
   d) models situations from the real world and uses the models to make predictions and informed decisions
   e) uses research, brainstorming, and creativity to formulate and evaluate solutions
   f) revises solutions as needed
   g) uses past experiences to solve problems, when appropriate
   h) uses, values, and evaluates mathematical and quantitative reasoning
   i) develops conceptual understanding, decision-making, and analytic skills dealing with quantities, their magnitudes, and interrelationships
   j) uses technology as an aid to understanding and as a tool in the solution of problems

B. Communicate Effectively

Definition: Effective communication requires the ability to accurately and critically utilize reading material, to produce clear and effective writing, to send coherent messages and to perform objective analysis. It also requires observational skills and the ability to effectively receive information. Good communicators know their own strengths and weaknesses in this area.

1. **Read effectively: The student...**
   a) reads actively by previewing, setting goals, modifying approaches, and analyzing / synthesizing key elements
   b) recognizes how his experiences, assumptions and values influence *the* comprehension of what is read
   c) examines how the author's experiences, assumptions, values, and purposes influence content and structure

2. **Write effectively: The student...**
   a) generates topics, organizes ideas, and produces an initial draft
   b) develops a topic in form and style appropriate to the audience, purpose, and content
   c) revises written work
   d) utilizes skills and resources to produce written work which demonstrates proper grammar, sentence structure, and spelling
   e) uses reference citations appropriately
   f) utilizes an effective note-taking system
   g) summarizes information in clear, coherent terms

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3. **Send messages effectively: The student...**
   a) develops messages that are suitable in form and delivery to a particular individual, group, occasion, setting, or purpose
   b) recognizes the many variables which influence effective communication: culture, gender, nonverbal symbols, the demands of the setting, changing contingencies, etc., and demonstrates adaptability and flexibility
   c) expresses ideas, opinions, and feelings politely and ethically with clarity and efficiency, using appropriate verbal/nonverbal channels to achieve goals
   d) obtains feedback in an appropriate manner: asking questions, paraphrasing, etc., and adjusts her communication based on feedback from others
   e) demonstrates appropriate and effective leadership and membership behaviors
   f) identifies and evaluates his and others' strengths and weaknesses as communicators

4. **Receive messages effectively: The student ...**
   a) identifies, paraphrases, and evaluates the main ideas in a message
   b) selects effective receiving behaviors based on the particular communication context and demonstrates involvement and responsiveness
   c) recognizes that she may interpret a message in a way that is different from that intended by the sender
   d) follows instructions
   e) understands and evaluates various communication methods and technologies
   f) identifies the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of communication

C. Interact Productively with Others

Definition: Productive interaction requires that we appreciate and accept each person's individuality, foster cooperation, constructively solve conflicts, view others in a positive light, encourage self-awareness, adapt to a fluid social environment, and use all of the above to work productively in a group.

The student...
   a) shows respect for others
   b) associates willingly with others in order to meet social and task goals
   c) understands, values, and respects differences
   d) accepts responsibility for his own behaviors
   e) recognizes the interdependence of the global community
   f) demonstrates the ability to live and work in a diverse society
   g) recognizes when interaction is appropriate
   h) uses self and group criticism to achieve desired outcomes and goals
   i) evaluates roles and performance during group activities
   j) raises issues and conflicts effectively and appropriately, as well as resolves conflicts
   k) integrates appropriate techniques into group activities to enhance interaction and achieve goals

D. Value and Practice Inquiry

Definition: Inquiry is not only seeking information, but looking beyond the question at hand to seek new questions.

The student...
   a) formulates and evaluates questions
   b) looks for innovative and creative approaches
   c) respects the questions of others
   d) gives and receives constructive criticism
   e) understands and values the role of life-long learning

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E. Access, Analyze, Understand, and Use Information

Definition: Information is stored in a variety of formats and locations. One must understand the need for information and have the ability to identify what type of information is needed before one can access, evaluate and effectively use information for life-long learning.

The student...

a) understands how information and information sources are identified, defined, and structured
b) evaluates sources and information in terms of quality, currency, usefulness, and truthfulness
c) understands the variety of ways information sources are physically organized and accessed
d) incorporates a variety of tools to search for necessary information
e) uses technology to access, retrieve, and communicate information
f) uses gathered information for planned purposes

F Accept Personal Responsibility

Definition: Responsibility requires a balance among the intellectual, physical, psychological, social and spiritual aspects of self, and compels one to act upon consequent convictions.

The student...

a) develops a process of self-assessment for personal understanding
b) defines and maintains a well-rounded self
c) establishes the self as the locus of control
d) establishes personal goals
e) formulates a code of ethics
f) understands the importance of physical and emotional well-being

G. Accept Social Responsibility

Definition: Liberal learning nurtures the capabilities for transforming human culture through inculcating a commitment to positive change, ethical development and the betterment of society and its communities.

The student...

a) thinks and acts in ways that manifest positive human development
b) acts in an ethical manner
c) thinks about and participates in activities that promote human and social development
d) states and understands the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
e) identifies ways to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
f) demonstrates an understanding of ethical principles (duties/dilemmas) and their impact on society
g) recognizes the diversity of political and social motivations
h) commits to positive change, ethical development, and the betterment of society by proposing courses of action to address social and political issues

H. Understand and Appreciate Aesthetic Expression

Definition: The many forms of art are personal and social expressions of how we organize and understand the world. They reveal values, perspectives, and stereotypes of self and others. The arts can entertain, edify, and exalt; they can construct our identity as both unique individuals and as members of a group; they can reinforce or challenge beliefs, values, and behaviors.

The student . . .

a) articulates her responses to a variety of artistic expressions
b) identifies and uses criteria to form aesthetic judgments
c) identifies and evaluates the influence of the arts
d) identifies roles, purposes, functions, and values of artistic expressions

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Appendix D: TIMETABLE FOR ASSESSMENT

1998 – 99 Academic Year	**Annual** *(commencing '99-'00)*
Aug. 3 – Submission of 5yr Plan to VCE	
Aug. 15 – '97-'98 Report to VCE-LT	
Sept. 14 – Lodging of 5yr Plan to College Academic Council	
Sept. 15 – College Services Workshop for Group III	
Oct. 9 – **Outcomes & Means of Assessment** (Form B) from career programs, college services	2nd. Fri. Oct. -- **Outcomes & Means of Assessment** (Form B) due from programs, college services, departments /disciplines
	Mid-Term -- Individual faculty Assessment Record due to department/discipline/program
Nov. 25 – Identification of General Education Learning Communities	Nov. mtg. Dist. College Academic Council – DAC suggestions to deactivate
Jan. 6 (Service Days) – Staff Development on Classroom Assessment	
February 8 – Approval of 5-Yr.Plan by College Academic Council	
March 1 – reporting of **Results** (Form C) to programs, college services, departments & disciplines	1st Mon. March – reporting of **Results** (Form C) to programs, college services, departments & disciplines
	Mid-Term. – Individual Faculty Assessment Records due
March – peer review of Assessment plan, structure, operation	March – peer review of Assessment plan, structure, operation
April 23 – Individual Faculty members submit Classroom Assessment Record to department / discipline / program	
April 16 -- career & developmental programs, college services, departments / disciplines report **Use of Results** (Form D	3rd Fri. April – career & developmental programs, college services, departments / disciplines report **Use of Results** (Form D)
	Aug. 15 – submission of Annual Report by Coordinator of Assessment

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Appendix E: Assessment Plan Features Which Address NCA Concerns

NCA concern (as contained in report)	Assessment Plan Features [*italics indicate existing features of December, 1996, Assessment Plan*]
• How will the plan be monitored?	➢ *Campus assessment committees report regularly to campus governance councils* ➢ *Coordinator of Assessment reports regularly to College Academic Council, College Institutional Affairs Council, and Leadership Team.* ➢ *Council sets timetable with due dates and monitors plans of assessment units; campus committees monitor compliance with timetable.* ➢ *Council annually reviews process and recommends/enacts changes to improve process.* ➢ District Assessment Council submits Annual Report to Vice Chancellor for Education, governance bodies, and College at large. ➢ Assessment process to be evaluated annually by peer review (through visit of assessment officer of another institution imported and compensated for the purpose.) ➢ Creation of professional position of Assessment Associate to monitor timetable for assessment and compliance by all college units. ➢ Provision for member of department/program/college service to enforce Council timetable in that assessment unit and monitor compliance with Council's instructions.

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NCA concern (as contained in report)	Assessment Plan Features [*italics indicate existing features of December, 1996, Assessment Plan*]
• Will the assessment results (be) fed back to academic and service units for improvement?	➢ *Data from assessments is directed to assessment units to report to District Assessment Council how the results were used to make improvement; reporting is done on standardized forms.* ➢ *District Assessment Council provides guidelines and parameters for assessment unit plans.* ➢ District Assessment Council collects data on two measures for all career programs, directs results to the programs, and requires report on use of the results. ➢ District Assessment Council requires from all developmental programs data on student progress in sequence courses and requires report on use of the data. ➢ District Assessment Council is to direct program evaluation for programs not meeting standards set by Council. ➢ District Assessment Council and Assessment Associate prepare annual public report to College Academic/Institutional Affairs Councils and Leadership Team for action.
• How will the results be used for strategic planning, budgeting, and curriculum development and improvement?	➢ District Assessment Council will annually identify to College Academic Council programs to deactivate because of low enrollment. ➢ Require use of assessment results in justifying new capital expenditure requests. ➢ Require use of assessment results to justify new staff positions. ➢ Establish reserve fund to facilitate assessment units' planning and funding of needed improvements identified by assessment. ➢ Require plan for assessment as integral part of new course and/or program curriculum proposals.

NCA concern (as contained in report)	Assessment Plan Features *[italics indicate existing features of December, 1996, Assessment Plan]*
• What are the specific goals and objectives against which the assessment plan will be evaluated?	➢ *Provision of staff development activities to train staff in rationale, procedures, and techniques of assessment. (ongoing since summer '97)* ➢ *Spring '97: Establish Council/committee structure for supervising and monitoring assessment (done by 6/97)* ➢ *Initiate program assessment over academic year 97-98 (done by 12/98, except General Education)* ➢ *Develop course profiles by Aug. 97 and implement course assessment by Fall '97* ➢ *Fall '97: Collect classroom assessment results* ➢ Fall '98: Begin assessment of General Education skills (done) ➢ Fall '98: Establishment of learning communities for each General Education skill area. ➢ Spring '99: Identification in each assessment unit of peer member to be responsible for organizing assessment in that unit. ➢ Spring '99: Extend classroom assessment to include all (or great majority) of faculty. ➢ Spring '99: Initiate peer review of the assessment process. ➢ Fall '99: Conduct course assessment on majority of courses. ➢ 1999- 04: Assess an additional General Education skill each year. ➢ Spring '01: Show evidence of involvement in assessment by majority of faculty members, academic programs and departments, and college services.

Appendix F: Job Descriptions – Assessment Plan

1. Assessment Associate

- Reports to the Director of Institutional Research
- Promotes assessment at the program, course and classroom levels.
- Coordinates the appropriate assessment reports.
- Prepares annual report on assessment.
- Enforces assessment timetable.
- Conducts assessment research
- Analyzes and organizes assessment results for use of Coordinator, Mentors, and Learning Units
- Maintains permanent records of assessment data as directed by the District Assessment Council
- Performs other research projects as determined by the Director of Institutional Research

2. Coordinator of Assessment

- Reports to the Vice Chancellor for Education, the College Academic Council, and the College Institutional Affairs Council
- Faculty member on full released time
- A faculty member may not serve for more than three consecutive years in this position.
- Prepares educational materials on assessment for faculty/staff
- Supervises training for the mentors
- Publishes monthly assessment news
- Serves as resource person for District Assessment Council, Campus Assessment Committees, and Learning Unit Mentors
- Convenes and chairs District Assessment Council
- Works with the District Assessment Council to prepare annual timetable for Council approval
- Works with campus staff development coordinators to arrange faculty/staff assessment training
- Intercedes as needed with faculty and administration on behalf of the assessment process
- Serves as a liaison between Assessment Associate, District Assessment Council, and campus faculty and staff

3. **District Assessment Council**

- Reports to College Academic Council and College Institutional Affairs Council
- Sets general policy for assessment structure and process (including setting annual timetable for assessment events)
- Identifies assessment units
- Supervises education about assessment
- Coordinates assessment college-wide
- Sets annual General Education outcome skill area to be assessed
- Analyzes results of General Education Assessment and recommends changes to improve learning

4. **Campus Assessment Committee**

- Reports to campus governance units
- Receives direction from District Assessment Council and Coordinator of Assessment
- Monitors and supports assessment units
- Collects and records the forms for career programs and college services

Appendix G: The Learning Circle Model

Staff Development Resources are typically expended to provide staff members with opportunities to attend workshops and conferences. The Learning Circle provides a forum for faculty and staff to meet in small groups in informal settings to explore topics related to education. Learning Circle members research, reflect on, and respond to a chosen topic of interest to the group.

Characteristics of Successful Learning Circles:

- Small (4-10 members) group of interested faculty and staff
- Interdisciplinary representation
- Project-oriented
- Minimal formal meeting schedule
- Designated spokesperson (enhances inter- and intra-group communication)
- Financial support from the institution (released time)

It is anticipated that Learning Communities based on the Learning Circle model and focused on assessment issues will accelerate St. Louis Community College's evolution to a culture of assessment.

(Learning Circle Model designed and implemented by Anne Wessely, Coordinator of Staff Development, St. Louis Community College at Meramec)

CAREER PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE
Accounting	M
Accounting Assistant	M
Administrative Office Systems	FV
Architectural Technology	M
Automotive Technology	FP
Aviation Technology Air Traffic Control Aviation Management Ground School	M
Banking and Finance	M
Biomedical Engineering Tech.	FV
Broadcast Engineering Analog Maintenance Digital Maintenance Production Maintenance	FP
Building Inspection Housing Inspection	FP
Business Administration	M
Central Service Technology	FP
Chemical Independence	M
Chemical Technology	FV
Child Care - AA Child Development Development Disabilities	M
Child Care: Assistant	M
Civil Engineering Technology	FV
Clinical Lab. Technology	FP
Commercial Photography Commercial/Industrial Commercial/Portrait Photo/Communications	FP
CADD	FV
Computer Aided Manufacturing	FV
Computer Aided Publishing	FP
Computer Engineering Technology	FV
Construction Technology	FV
Corporate Security	FP
Court Reporting	M
Credit Management	FV
Criminal Justice Corrections	M
Deaf Communication Interpreter	FV
Dental Assisting	FP
Dental Hygiene	FP

PROGRAM	ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE
Desktop Publishing	M
Dietetic Technology Food Service Nutrition	FV
Electrical Engineering	FV
Electronic Studio	FV
Emergency Medical	FP
Entrepreneurship	M
Fashion Merchandising	FV
Fire Protection Safety	FP
Food Distribution	M
Funeral Director	FP
Gardener Training	M
Gerontology	FP
Graphic Communication	FV
Horticulture	M
Hospitality Culinary Arts Hotel/Restaurant Mngmnt	FP
Human Services Corrections Disabilities	FV
Industrial Electronics	FV
Information Systems AS 400 Programmer Network Specialist Microcomputer Applications Programmer/Analyst	FV
Interior Design Store Planning	M
International Business	FP
Labor/Management Relations	M
Lead Maintenance Mechanic	FP
Legal Assistant	M
Legal Office Systems	FV
Logistics Management	M
Maintenance Mechanic	FP
Management/Supervisory	M
Manufacturing Technology Computer Design Production	FV
Mass Communications Print Broadcasting	FP

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CAREER PROGRAMS *cont.*

Mechanical Engineering Tech.	FV
PROGRAM	**ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE**
Medical Transcription Office Support	FV
Microcomputer Applications	FV
Microcomputer Programming	FV
Microprocessors: specialization	FV
Nursing	FP
Occupational Therapy Ass't	M
Office Assistant	FV
Office Systems Management	FV
Paramedic Technology	FP
Phlebotomy	FP
Photo Lab Technician	FP
Physical Therapist Assistant	M
Plumbing Design	FP
Quality Control Technology	FV
Radiologic Technology	FP
Real Estate	M
Respiratory Therapy	FP
Robotics Technology	FP
Sales	M
Surgical Technology	FP
Technical/Business Communication	FP
Technical Illustration	M
Telecommunications Engineering Technology Basic Electronics	FV
Tourism Business Mngmnt Travel Agency Mngmnt	FP
Ultrasound Technology	FP
Voice/Data Communications Analyst	M

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE
Reading	FV
FP--Learning Achievement Centers FP, FV, M--Reading Centers M--Study Skills Center	M
Writing	FP
Math	M

= Not assessed in 97-98

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Appendix H: Committee Assignments of College Services / Departments & Disciplines Career / Development Programs

College Service	Group	Forms To
Access Offices	1	CA
Accounts Payable	2	FV
Admissions	2	M
Advising	3	M
Affirmative Action	3	FP
Alumni Relations		
Assessment Offices	2	FP
Assessment Program	3	CA
Bookstores	2	M
Bursar	2	FV
Business Offices	2	FV
Campus Administration*	3	M
Career & Employment Services	2	FV
Cashier's Office	2	FV
Central Student Records	3	M
Chancellor's Office	3	CA
Child Care Center	3	M
Community Development	2	CA
Community Relations	1	M
Computer Operations	3	CA
Continuing Education (includes Harrison Center, SCEC, WCEC, & Telecourse Office)	1	M
Counseling	3	M
Controller	3	CA
Development Office	1	CA
Divisional Administration**	2	M
Employee Benefits	3	CA
Employment	3	CA
Engineering	3	CA
Financial Aid	3	FV
General Accounting	2	FV
General Counsel	3	CA

College Service	Group	Forms To
Grounds	3	CA
Health Services/Nurse	2	FV
Housekeeping	3	CA
HVAC/Stationary Engineering	3	CA
Info. Systems & Programming	2	CA
Institutional Research	1	CA
Intercollegiate Athletics	2	FP
Internal Audit	3	DIR
International Education	2	CA
Libraries	2	FV
Maintenance	3	CA
Media Services	2	FV
Payroll	2	FV
Printing	2	M
Purchasing	2	CA
Receiving/Warehouse	3	CA
Registrar	1	M
Security	1	FP
Sexual Harassment	3	FP
Staff Development	3	CA
Strategic Planning	3	CA
Student Accounting	2	FV
Student Activities	3	FP
Tech & Net Support	3	CA
Telecommunications & Engineering	3	CA
Telelearning	3	CA
Vocational Education	2	FP

* "Campus Administration" is the collective term given to the three campus presidents & offices.

** "Divisional Administration" is the collective term given to the deans, executive and associate.

DEPARTMENT/DISCIPLINE ASSIGNMENTS TO CAMPUS COMMITTEES

DEPARTMENT/DISCIPLINE	RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE		
Art	***FV***		
Biology	***FV***		
Behavioral Sciences (Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology)			***M***
Business Administration / Economics			***M***
Chemistry/Geology/Physics/ Physical Science			***M***
Engineering and Technology	***FV***		
English		***FP***	
Foreign Languages			***M***
History/Political Science		***FP***	
Information Systems	***FV***		
Library Services	***FV***		
Mass Communication/ Communication/Theatre		***FP***	
Mathematics		***FP***	
Music			***M***
Philosophy/Humanities		***FP***	
Physical Education		***FP***	
Reading	***FV***		

As adopted by District Assessment Council, August 20, 1998

Appendix J: ASSESSMENT VOCABULARY
And
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Assessment: NCA uses the following description:

> The systematic collection, examination, and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data about student learning and the use of that information to document and to improve student learning. (Faculty Guide, p.2)*
>
> n.b. to distinguish between the assessment of incoming student abilities which has been done for years, the earlier process has been called *Intake Assessment* with this new process identified as *Outcomes Assessment*.

Staff Evaluation This is the process by which employee performance is measured in an institution and has NO connection with assessment.

> Board Policy C 19 Employee Evaluation ¶ 2 "... While it is expected that all employees will participate in assessment activities relevant to their service or program and may choose to cite these activities as part of their self-evaluation, employee evaluation will be separate from assessment."

- Assessment is not and should not be associated with faculty evaluation...
- The object of analysis is the program or service, not the individual student or faculty member.
- Assessment is about improving learning not judging teaching. (Faculty Guide, p.3)

Assessment Unit This is a generic term for any group of employees who are doing assessment and includes academic departments and programs, learning units, and college services: the individual faculty member is also an assessment unit.

Outcomes (D)escriptions of what the department faculty intends for students to know, think, or be able to do when they have completed the program, as well as attitudes, values, and skills to be acquired as citizens, employees, and life-time learners. (Faculty Guide, p. 7) Additionally, there are outcomes for any course, often identified in the syllabus, and outcomes for any day's class meeting.

Means of Assessment (T)he mechanism by which student achievement of the outcome is ascertained. (Faculty Guide, p.10) Examples include surveys, interviews, standardized tests, portfolios, juried performances, research data from outside sources, peer review, etc.

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* All references to Faculty Guide herein are to the *Assessment Faculty Guide* (August 1997) distributed to all faculty members at service week.

Use of Results Here the department members decide what the results tell them about student learning. (Faculty Guide, p.12) The Campus Committee is to see that, whatever the use of the results indicated by the faculty, it gets done and recorded, as this is the fruit of assessment and the part of the record that will be of greatest interest to outside observers. The Use of the Results is the part of the assessment process that most concerns faculty members as it carries the implied threat of 'telling a faculty member how to teach.' Therefore, it should be emphasized that only the department can decide how to use the results and that the results are typically about program content, not individual teaching techniques. (p.13) This is the 'feedback loop' emphasized by NCA, where the faculty who decide the outcomes use the assessment results to improve the outcomes, e.g., the next class, the next semester of the course, the program for the next set of graduates..

Levels of Assessment

- **Classroom** Assessment: An exercise or activity selected or designed by the individual instructor to discover what students are learning or if students are learning what was intended in a single class meetings or a small number of consecutive class meetings. The instructor evaluates the results to decide if changes are needed in future class meetings. The typical question addressed by the assessment is, Did students learn what I intended them to learn today?
- **Course** Assessment: Activities selected by faculty members who teach a course to discover if students are learning what those faculty members intend as a result of taking that given course. Those instructors – occasionally that would mean an entire department – decide if the results require changes in the course to improve student learning. The typical questions addressed by course assessment are, Do students taking the course learn what we, the faculty who teach it, intend them to learn and acquire the skills, attitudes, and competencies which we intend for them to have at the end of the course?
- **Program** Assessment: Activity identified by faculty members of a program and staff members of a college service, to measure two or more of the many outcomes (goals, objectives) intended by that program or service. The typical questions addressed by assessment of career programs are, Can most of our graduates find employment in the field? Are employers satisfied with the graduates' knowledge, skills, and attitudes? The typical question addressed by assessment of developmental programs is, Are most students who are successful in a given developmental course successful in the following course for which that course was a prerequisite?
- **Institutional Effectiveness**: The accrediting agency term for the collective effect of all these measures as an assessment of the whole college. Typical question for this level is, Does the college fulfill its stated mission?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Why is the North Central Association making us do assessment?

A. Right now, higher education is concerned with two national issues: the learning college and accountability. Assessment, actually, is not a new concept at all and addresses both these issues. Most teachers have been engaged in some types of assessment throughout their teaching careers and have found it to be a tool for understanding what their students are learning. Assessment also acts as a means of documenting that we, as faculty, are doing what we say we're doing.

Q. What is the connection among the various levels of assessment?

A. Let's remember that the focus of assessment is student learning. The most significant educational interaction happens between students and instructors in the classroom. The individual class section is part of a course, and courses are parts of departments and programs. These levels reflect different, yet interrelated, facets of the student's education.

Q. How will assessment help improve learning?

A. Assessment is merely a tool; however, it is a tool by which we can communicate with our students about learning. Assessment does not accomplish learning...but it provides information to the instructor who may use it to improve learning.

Q. Are adjunct faculty involved?

A. You bet! All faculty--full and part-time--are involved in student learning. We have many creative and dedicated adjunct faculty at SLCC, and the Assessment Committees will be planning several workshops at various times and locations to ensure everyone has an opportunity to learn about assessment.

Q. The forms are daunting. Why do we have to fill out so many forms?

A. While faculty will participate collectively in department/discipline/program assessment of courses and/or program assessment, individually faculty members are responsible for the Classroom Assessment Record form which consists of two questions. Initially, we ask that individual faculty fill out one form for each CAT performed. Assessment Units (programs, services, etc.) will fill out Form A once and Forms B, C, and D once each year. In fact, programs and college services are already doing so.

Q. What happens to the Classroom Assessment Forms?

A. The Classroom Assessment Records will remain within the department/discipline/program, which will provide a summary report each semester regarding classroom assessment activity within that unit. More importantly, the Classroom Assessment Records can act as a springboard for staff development within the unit, allowing the faculty to talk to each other about teaching.

Q. When will we have time to talk about teaching?

A. The Five Year Plan recommends that a block of time be set aside during Service Days for faculty to get together to focus on assessment, but there are many other possibilities: department meetings, learning circles, brown bag lunches, etc.. Faculty need to work with the Staff Development Coordinators on their campuses to devise creative ways to share ideas.

Q. What happens if some faculty don't cooperate and refuse to participate in assessment?

A. This is an administrative issue, not a faculty issue. Assessment is faculty-driven and, largely, faculty controlled. As faculty, we cannot force, nor do we wish to force, colleagues to participate in any activity.

Q. Does this plan bypass the established chain of command?

A. No. This assessment plan provides a framework for faculty to shape the direction of their classes, courses, and programs; furthermore, this plan depends upon cooperation and communication among faculty, department chairs, and associate deans. In addition, assessment should never be confused with faculty evaluation; consequently, the faculty in the departments/disciplines/programs need to be the ones setting the outcomes and means of assessment, not the associate deans.